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July 25, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write regarding Department of Transportation efforts to implement federal law concerning the treatment of small musical instruments as carry-on luggage on commercial airlines.

This week, the Providence Journal reported that Rhode Island members of the band Deer Tick were detained and delayed on their return from Nashville after they were barred from bringing their guitars as carry-on luggage. Despite a federal law concerning the transport of instruments on commercial airlines, musicians continue to report similar experiences, as well as the loss, theft, or damage to their instruments when they have been required to place them in in the baggage hold.

As you know, Section 403 of the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2012 states that air carriers "shall permit a passenger to carry a violin, guitar, or other musical instrument in the aircraft cabin," provided "the instrument can be stowed safely in a suitable baggage compartment in the aircraft cabin or under a passenger seat" and that "there is space for such stowage at the time the passenger boards the aircraft."

Under the law, which was enacted in February 2012, the Department of Transportation was required to adopt regulations to carry out this provision within two years. The law cannot become effective until a final rule has been issued. Regrettably, the deadline has passed without a final rule, and the absence of a final rule has created confusion and led to unfortunate incidents like the one my constituents experienced. Therefore, I would ask that you expedite the rulemaking and that you provide a timeline for the issuance of final regulations on this law.

Thank you for your attention to this request, and I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator