

**NATIONAL AIRLINES COUNCIL OF CANADA
CONSEIL NATIONAL DES LIGNES AÉRIENNES DU CANADA**



**NACC Opening Statement on Bill C-42,
an Act to Amend the Aeronautics Act**

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MR. CHAIRMAN, HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

- Thank you for the opportunity to appear this morning to outline why the National Airlines Council of Canada wholeheartedly supports passage of Bill C-42.
- We are here on behalf of WestJet, Air Canada, Air Transat, and Jazz Air LP to briefly outline for you the operational and economic fallout that would occur if Canadian carriers are denied access to US air space for overflight.
- During debate at Second Reading it has been implied that denying Canadian carriers' access to US air space for overflight may simply make flying times somewhat longer. In fact the impact is far greater than that.
- Simply put air services from Canada to Mexico, the Caribbean, or South America would no longer be commercially viable if we are denied access to transit through US airspace en route to those destinations.
- Flights from Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes would all have to head farther East over the Atlantic Ocean. Up to four hours additional flying time round trip for each flight would result in significantly increasing fuel burn and drastically reducing the amount of payload carried. More significantly, the additional flight time would mean that the vast majority of destinations could no longer be served – you could not fly there anymore – because they exceed the safe performance limitations of the aircraft.
- Flights from Western Canada would need to head West over the Pacific, and would run into similar operational and geographic realities. The air space west of the continental United States is one of the busiest oceanic routes in the world due to east -west traffic from the continental US running to various Pacific destinations. From an air traffic control perspective north-south flights across that corridor would simply be impracticable as they would be prohibited, or at best severely restricted by air traffic control.
- Furthermore, even if there were a handful of destinations that might still be served, the dramatic increase in flying time and the necessary increase in airfares to cover the increased fuel burn would make the flights completely unattractive to Canadian consumers. Why would someone choose to fly out of Canada on a flight that is now up to four hours longer, when you could simply drive across the border and fly on US carriers, to take advantage of the much shorter flying time and commensurately lower fares?

- Thus from a commercial and operational perspective, being denied access to US airspace for overflight would be an unmitigated disaster for Canadian air carriers and our passengers. Given the operational realities and the commercial impact, carriers would largely cancel service on these routes. The economic impact on Canadian carriers would be severe. The winter schedules are already set, the tour packages and room nights etc. are already booked, the crew scheduling and aircraft scheduling are already locked in. In brief, denial of access to these markets would create insurmountable challenges and seriously undermine the economic strength of the industry.
- We urge the Committee and Parliament to pass C-42. Thank you.