

Submitted by email to the Canadian Transportation Agency

Subject: Airline regulation

Dear CTA:

The Canadian Press says you are interested in public views on airline requests to weaken regulations protecting passengers. Here are the views of two of us.

- (1) Flight vouchers instead of refunds in the case of cancellations are a transparent attempt to load the costs of the pandemic on the small number of passengers who are foolish enough to trust the airlines with their cash. If one is going somewhere for a business meeting and is offered a later date, there is no point in travelling. If one a mother with an 80th birthday on a certain date, or has tickets for the Canadian Opera for a certain date but the airline says you can't go, a voucher is a cruel joke. The promise is worthless.
- (2) Yes, the airlines are suffering huge financial losses due to Covid-19 (and to the 737 Max fiasco), but loading those costs onto their customers is irresponsible. Normal rules should apply. If there is a public policy reason to keep the airlines in being, the cost should be borne by the whole country, not just those few citizens whose affection for Via Rail is growing hourly.
- (3) The Minister is correct in making full refunds for cancelled tickets a condition precedent to any financial assistance to the airlines, and in establishing limits on executive bonuses, and share buybacks.

Sincerely,

Harry and Julie Swain