

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2014

CONTACT: Jennifer Michels  
202.628.9262 703.395.2195  
[jenniferm@ttd.org](mailto:jenniferm@ttd.org)

## Senators Ask DOT to Protect U.S. Airline Jobs, Reject Gaming of U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement

WASHINGTON, DC—A bipartisan group of 38 Senators today urged the Department of Transportation to ensure U.S. airline jobs are protected, and U.S. law and aviation trade agreements are not violated, when considering Norwegian Air International's application for a foreign air carrier permit.

Led by Sens. Brian Schatz (D-HI), Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and Roy Blunt (R-MO), the Senators conveyed their employee protection concerns to DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx. "The U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement was a historic agreement that not only expanded opportunities for consumers and businesses, but protected our high labor standards," said Senator Schatz. "NAI's permit application to the DOT is concerning, and we need to uphold the integrity of the bilateral agreement and the labor standards that protect American jobs," he said.

"NAI's structure raises several serious questions about what employment protections will apply to NAI's workforce," the Senators wrote. "We strongly urge you to examine this arrangement to ensure its full compliance with the U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement labor provisions and consistency with U.S. law."

TTD President Edward Wytkind, who will testify today before the Senate Commerce aviation subcommittee on this and other global aviation issues, thanked the Senators for taking a stand. "I appreciate the efforts of 38 Senators who have joined us in raising concerns about the NAI application and its far-reaching implications for U.S. airlines and employees," he said. "Clearly momentum is on our side as we build opposition to this flag of convenience airline scheme that has no place in our aviation trade relationship with Europe."

NAI will be a Norwegian company by name only as it will register its aircraft in Ireland, evade the laws of Norway and hire crews based in Thailand under individual contracts governed by the laws of Singapore. NAI's operating plan, as detailed in its application to the DOT, would violate the terms and clear intent of the labor provisions (Article 17 bis) embodied in the U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement that embrace "high labor standards."

"If NAI is the face of liberalized U.S.-EU aviation trade, we'll take a pass," Wytkind said. "The Obama Administration must reject NAI's application as it violates our laws and circumvents the U.S.-EU trade agreement."

###

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

815 16th Street NW / 4th Floor / Washington DC 20006  
Tel:202.628.9262 / Fax:202.628.0391 / [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org)

Edward Wytkind, President / Larry I. Willis, Secretary-Treasurer



*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*