

TTD NEWS RELEASE

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Transportation Labor Encourages U.S. and EU Delegations to Fully Enforce Critical Labor Protections

Washington, DC – Today, Edward Wytkind commented on the U.S.-EU government-to-government meeting held in Brussels, Belgium on the legal meaning and applicability of Article 17 bis of the U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement.

“We were pleased to see that the U.S. and EU had scheduled a meeting to discuss Article 17 bis of the U.S.-EU Open Skies Agreement, and its applicability in cases such as Norwegian Air International’s (NAI) application under the agreement. Transportation labor fought hard to ensure that this important labor protection article was included in the second stage negotiations, which were concluded in 2010. At that time, U.S. and European officials praised the article as an important step forward, with European Commission Vice-President for Transportation, Siim Kallas, [stating](#) that the article ‘will not only ensure that the existing legal rights of airline employees are preserved, but that the implementation of the agreement will contribute to high labour standards.’

Now, more than ever, we believe that the full enforcement of this article is critical to the successful implementation of the Agreement and the continued health and expansion of the transatlantic aviation marketplace. Importantly, Congress agrees. The U.S. House of Representatives recently unanimously passed an amendment stating that no application shall be granted if it violates Article 17 bis or U.S. public interest law, and the Senate is poised to follow suit.

We have stated unequivocally that the proposed flag of convenience scheme being peddled by NAI directly violates Article 17 bis, and is in fact the very type of market-distorting gimmick that negotiators intended to prevent.

As U.S. and EU officials meet to discuss how article 17 bis ‘applies to carriers seeking either U.S. or EU authorizations under the ATA,’ we are hopeful that they will come to this same conclusion. We look forward to seeing the full summary of today’s meeting, and are eager to offer our comments as we work together to ensure that the U.S. and European airlines and workers can continue to compete on a balanced playing field, and one where NAI’s flag of convenience scheme has no place.”

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