

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 4, 2026

The Honorable Christopher Sununu  
President and CEO  
Airlines for America  
1275 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 1300  
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Governor Sununu,

As you know, rising jet fuel prices are dramatically increasing travel costs for American consumers and input costs for your member airlines. We are writing to request information from the member airlines of your organization regarding the measures they plan to take in response to higher jet fuel costs, and how rising prices will impact the broader air travel industry.

The war with Iran has effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz, leading to the largest energy supply disruption in history. Approximately 20% of global jet fuel passes through the Strait.<sup>1</sup> In addition, nearly a third of global crude supply passes through the Strait—up to 10% of which is also refined into jet fuel in other regions.<sup>2</sup>

Gasoline prices have increased by 50% in the last two months, and jet fuel prices have more than doubled since February 28.<sup>3,4</sup> Forecasts estimate that airlines will face up to \$24.1 billion in additional fuel expenses in 2026.<sup>5</sup>

Airlines are already taking steps in response to increased input costs. All major U.S. carriers raised checked baggage fees in April.<sup>6</sup> United CEO Scott Kirby recently stated that the airline could increase ticket prices by as much as 20% in response to the current oil market dynamics.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Chart of the Week: Middle East Conflict Exposes Jet Fuel Supply Vulnerabilities*. IATA. (March 6, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.iata.org/en/publications/economics/chart-week/chart-of-the-week-6-march-2026/>).

<sup>2</sup> *Jet fuel supplies are sharply affected by the near-closure of the Strait of Hormuz*, NPR. (April 15, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.npr.org/2026/04/15/nx-s1-5783973/jet-fuel-supplies-are-sharply-affected-by-the-near-closure-of-the-strait-of-hormuz>).

<sup>3</sup> *Gasoline costs 50% more in the US than it did before the Iran war*, AP. (May 5, 2026). (Online at: <https://apnews.com/article/gasoline-oil-war-iran-strait-of-hormuz-0e5b61be4a4c8a8a077ed5ff6f84c0ce>).

<sup>4</sup> *Airlines cut routes in response to rising jet fuel costs amid Iran war*, CBS News. (April 17, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/airlines-route-cuts-iran-war-jet-fuel/>).

<sup>5</sup> Deutsche Bank Research, “Airlines: March Q ‘26 Preview/Jun Q ‘26 Outlook - A crude reality: airlines face \$40 billion fuel bill.” (April 7, 2026).

<sup>6</sup> *The Iran war sent jet fuel prices sky-high. Here’s what air travelers should know*, NPR. (May 5, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.npr.org/2026/05/05/nx-s1-5811918/iran-war-jet-fuel-baggage-fees-travel-tips>).

<sup>7</sup> *United CEO Scott Kirby Is Betting You’ll Pay 20% More to Fly. He Might Be Right*, Yahoo Finance. (April 22, 2026). (Online at: <https://finance.yahoo.com/sectors/energy/articles/united-ceo-scott-kirby-betting-201300484.html?guccounter=1>).

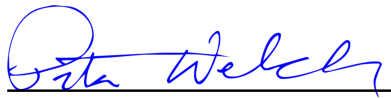
Delta announced route reductions beginning in June.<sup>8</sup> Last week, JetBlue announced route reductions and the termination of service at select airports amid the current “capacity crisis.”<sup>9</sup>

We are concerned about consumer access to safe and affordable air travel as we head into a busy summer travel season. We request responses to the following questions by June 17, 2026, and by the same date, a briefing by you and representatives from A4A member airlines on current market forecasts and projections as the Strait of Hormuz crisis continues:

1. How do jet fuel prices affect route economics and air service decisions, particularly as it concerns small- and medium-sized airports?
2. What steps have A4A members taken to prevent future airline ticket increases, route reductions, and flight cancellations at small- and medium-sized airports?
3. Even if the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz is imminent, are elevated jet fuel prices expected to persist and continue to impact consumer prices? How long are the impacts projected to last?
4. Are any A4A member airlines considering measures such as delaying investments, pausing hiring, increasing baggage fees, or increasing ticket prices to address the jet fuel price increases? If so, please identify which measures are under consideration.
5. The Iran war energy crisis has already ended operations for Spirit Airlines. Are any A4A members also at risk of bankruptcy or closure should the war in Iran continue through the summer and into the fall?

We appreciate your time and look forward to your responses.

Sincerely,



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Aviation,  
Space and Innovation  
Senate Committee on  
Commerce, Science and  
Transportation



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

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<sup>8</sup> *Airlines cut routes in response to rising jet fuel costs amid Iran war*, CBS News. (April 17, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/airlines-route-cuts-iran-war-jet-fuel/>).

<sup>9</sup> *JetBlue to pull out of N.H.'s largest airport amid 'capacity crisis,' officials say*. The Boston Globe. (May 15, 2026). (Online at: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2026/05/15/metro/jet-blue-to-pull-out-of-nh-manchester-boston-airport/?event=event12>).