

Dear Club President and Delegates,

I am sending this email out to advise you of an urgent need to become involved in an issue that will personally affect every member of our clubs. United Airlines is changing their check luggage policy effective May 5. Under the revised luggage policy, United Airlines will allow one checked luggage and any additional luggage would be charged \$25.

This means that when you are traveling with your skis and boots and check them with your luggage then you will pay \$25 for each leg of travel both outbound and inbound, in other words \$50 for a round trip. The NSCF (National Ski Council Federation) is leading a letter and email campaign to voice our displeasure with the change in the United Airline policy and we need your help.

The NSCF noted that United is waiting until May 5 to start charging this service fee, after the traditional ski season. Their schedule allows time for the other airlines to follow their lead or choose to leave their policies, as has been the tradition. If we can keep the remaining carriers from changing their policies, United may be forced to rescind the new changes in order to remain competitive. Please join the Federation in sending letters of encouragement to the other airlines not follow United's lead.

In addition to the letter writing campaign being encouraged by the Federation, they have enlisted support against the baggage policy from Congressman Mark Udall (D-CO) in a letter to the President of the Air Transport Association. In this letter, Congressman Udall expresses concern for the United Airlines' decision to charge domestic economy passengers \$25 each way for a second piece of checked baggage. He explains that the new policy burdens air passengers, and has the potential to damage local economies. Under the new policy, a family of four traveling to Colorado to ski will need to factor in an extra \$200 roundtrip if they want to check their skis alongside their individual suitcases. This policy is bad for budget-minded families, and could have an affect on mountain resort economies throughout the country by enticing families to vacation closer to home. In concluding his remarks, the Congressman

states that with the near-record number of flight delays last year and numerous reports of airline passengers stranded on the tarmac for hours at a time, there is great deal of public discontent with the airline industry. The Congressman urges United Airlines to rescind its policy of charging passengers a fee for a second piece of checked baggage, and hope the Air Transport Association member airlines would avoid the policy altogether.

As of this writing, US Air is following United's lead and implementing a \$25 service fee for a second checked bag. I encourage you to go to the NSCF web site and get involved with this campaign to discourage other air carriers from joining United and US Air. To access the NSCF web site go to the CMSC web site (skicleveland.com) and you can direct link to the NSCF web site. Click on the NEWSROOM heading and then click on the AIRLINE BAGGAGE heading on the right side of the page.

From their, you can read a statement from Mike Sanford, the NSCF President and click on Congressman Udall's letter. You will also find templates to use for expressing your concerns about the \$25 service fee for an additional checked baggage and another list with addresses of the major airline carriers.

Keep in mind that this is starting with ski equipment but can easily carry over to other sports requiring additional baggage. Imagine paying an additional \$25 fee for golf equipment, tennis rackets, SCUBA equipment, etc. Join us and take the time to send an email or mail a letter and express your concerns for this service charge. I am asking that each of you check out the NSCF web site, copy the articles, and discuss this issue at your next ski club meeting. Help us spread the word on this by putting this information into your clubs newsletters and encouraging your club members to act. Time is critical and we need to act NOW!

Thanks in advance for your support.

Michael Neibecker
CMSC President