

victims of September 11th from having their compensation decided by a federal bankruptcy court.

This bill also protects the city of New York, its police department, and its fire department—all of which have conducted themselves so valiantly. This measure is supported by elected leaders in New York, as well as New York congressional members from both sides of the aisle (Mr. NADLER excluded).

Mayor Guiliani, in a letter supporting the bill, noted that “The measure that Chairman YOUNG will bring to the floor will contain a manager’s amendment that would provide New York with much needed relief from potential liability arising out of the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Any substitute would fail to provide the City the fiscal protection it needs from potentially limitless lawsuits. . . . Passage of Chairman YOUNG’S bill would solve one large part of the City’s potential liability exposure, and help ensure steady progress toward utilizing our resources to address critical fiscal matters.”

Governor Pataki has written “I can only underscore the importance of passage for not only the manager’s amendment and the bill, but also the defeat of any substitute amendment scheduled to be offered. . . . H.R. 3150 with the manager’s amendment will free the city of New York and the Port Authority of under burdens which could seriously slow or even derail those rebuilding efforts.”

New York is our nation’s center of commerce, and it thrives on the flow of capital. By passing the Manager’s Amendment today, we can prevent the prospect of unlimited liability damage awards from turning New York from the nation’s financial capital into a business graveyard. Last month, Congress appropriately placed limits on the potential liability of the airlines in order to keep planes in the air. That’s current law. Given that there is a finite amount of funds available for victims from any airline found liable, the question becomes: Does the House want more money to go to trial lawyers, or to victims? It’s that simple. The more money lawyers get from a limited source of funds, the less victims get. Let’s stand solidly behind the victims today and pass the Manager’s Amendment.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I must oppose H.R. 3150, the Airport Security Federalization Act. As the short title of the bill suggests, this legislation is a bureaucracy-laden approach. While the approach of this legislation is marginally preferable to the complete federalization of the workforce being offered by the House Minority, the bill is otherwise strikingly similar to the Senate’s approach. Regrettably, I think portions of the manager’s amendment actually make the legislation worse. For example, the deputization of private security forces is clearly a step in the wrong direction.

I have offered an alternate bill which would accomplish security goals without expanding the federal government. My bill would not create new federal spending nor new federal bureaucracies.

Mr. Chairman, the bill before us, while a slight improvement over the Senate version, is still a step in the wrong direction. By authorizing a new airline ticket tax, by creating new federal mandates and bureaucracies, and by subsidizing the airline industry to the tune of another \$3 billion, this bill creates a costly expense that the American people cannot afford. We appropriated \$40 billion in the wake of

September 11, and I supported that measure as legitimate compensation for individuals and companies harmed by the failure of the federal government to provide national defense. Soon thereafter we made another \$15 billion available to the airlines, and now we have a House bill that further victimizes the taxpayers by making them pay for another \$3 billion worth of subsidies to the airline industry.

We need to stop this spending spree. I oppose this new taxation and spending, as well as the steps taken in this bill, the substitute, and unfortunately in the manager’s amendment as well. Each of these items moves further down the road of nationalizing air travel in this country and, as such, must be rejected.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the manager’s amendment and in support of the Democratic Substitute.

Airport security is a legitimate federal responsibility. Just as we protect our borders, guard against smuggling, and protect against illegal drugs, we must also protect our citizens against terrorists who board our planes and travel our skies with guns, knives, and bombs.

However, the Manager’s amendment does not accomplish this. Instead, this amendment expands the provision that we already passed, limiting liability for airlines that were used by terrorists on September 11, 2001 and applies that provision to “any person liable for any damages arising out of the hijacking.” This would limit the liability of everyone, including an airport security company that allowed terrorists to get on a plane with box cutters.

Even worse, the liability provisions go far beyond the protections included in the airline bailout bill we passed in September. This is because the amendment totally bans punitive damages, eliminates prejudgment interest, mandates collateral source, and limits victims’ attorneys’ fees. All of this was done without the benefit of a single hearing or any consideration by the Judiciary Committee. And all of this harms the victims.

Members should know that these provisions are far more extreme than the liability relief requested by the supposed beneficiaries of the provisions—the owners of the World Trade Center and the airplane manufacturers. This amendment is too broad, benefits the wrongdoers, and would have a number of harmful and unintended consequences for victims of terrorism. Please vote no on the manager’s amendment and support the Democratic Substitute. Passing this manager’s amendment constitutes special interest legislating at its worst. It is wrong and I urge the Members to reject it.

SECURE TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA ACT

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, today I rise in support of H.R. 3150, the Secure Transportation for America Act introduced by Representative DON YOUNG (R-AK). This legislation is an important part of our ongoing efforts in Congress to ensure the safety and well-being of all Americans who travel by air as it makes substantial, long overdue improvements to our nation’s aviation security system.

H.R. 3150 ensures maximum safety for passengers and airline crews through a series of comprehensive security measures. First and foremost, this bill puts the Federal Government in complete charge of adopting and im-

plementing strict passenger and baggage screening standards. This responsibility will be given to a new Transportation Security Administration within the Department of Transportation and will be headed by a new Under Secretary. While H.R. 3150 does not strictly call for airport screeners and baggage checkers to be federal employees, it gives the Administration the flexibility to choose either a Federal or private workforce. This discretion ensures that we have a security system that is both professional and efficient.

I am also pleased that at the request of Representative MIKE FERGUSON (R-NJ) and myself, we had included in this legislation two important security provisions. One calls for complete background checks for all airport screeners and employees who have access to restricted areas of our airports. The second establishes a system to screen all passenger baggage. I am thankful to Chairman YOUNG and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for including these two important measures in this bill. In addition, this legislation strengthens cockpit doors and deploys Federal Air Marshals on domestic flights.

Mr. Chairman, as you well know the tragic events of September 11th have forced us to rethink all security in our country like no other time in history. I am pleased that Congress has already acted by giving President Bush \$3 billion to address immediate aviation security needs. By passing H.R. 3150, we put the Federal Government in charge of aviation security, thus ensuring that safety both at our airports and in our skies remains paramount. Make no mistake, on this issue there can be no compromise on safety.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman, from those first tragic moments on September 11, two things were immediately clear.

First, fundamental, systemic changes have to be made in airline security.

And second, Americans responded with enormous heroism. Every Member of this House has noted that this remarkable courage saved lives and reaffirmed our national spirit.

Within hours, we saw Iron Workers clearing tons of rubble at Ground Zero with cranes, bulldozers and by hand. Round-the-clock emergency care from medical professionals. Teamsters trucking in rescue supplies from across the country.

All members of labor unions. Many continue to work up to this very moment to honor the memory of the hundreds of union firefighters, union police officers, union paramedics, and union maintenance workers who died trying to help others. To honor the memory of the 1000 sisters and brothers—representing 24 unions—who perished that day.

From the pilots and flight attendants who lost their lives on September 11, to the postal workers who were the first to fall victim to bioterrorism on our shores. These are genuine American heroes.

They work hard and proud. Each day. For us.

Which is why it is so unthinkable that unions are now under attack in this debate.

We all agree about the urgent need to upgrade airport security. There is consensus about how to do it, and how to pay for it. Nearly 30 years ago, the airlines themselves testified before Congress that the only way to seriously combat hijacking threat was with federalized airport security.