

CHAPTER 417 -- OPERATIONS OF CARRIERS

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SUBCHAPTER I -- REQUIREMENTS

Sec. 41701. Classification of air carriers

The Secretary of Transportation may establish --

(1) reasonable classifications for air carriers when required because of the nature of the transportation provided by them; and

(2) reasonable requirements for each class when the Secretary decides those requirements are necessary in the public interest.

Sec. 41702. Interstate air transportation

An air carrier shall provide safe and adequate interstate air transportation.

Sec. 41703. Navigation of foreign civil aircraft

(a) Permitted Navigation. -- A foreign aircraft, not part of the armed forces of a foreign country, may be navigated in the United States only --

(1) if the country of registry grants a similar privilege to aircraft of the United States;

(2) by an airman holding a certificate or license issued or made valid by the United States Government or the country of registry;

(3) if the Secretary of Transportation authorizes the navigation; and

(4) if the navigation is consistent with terms the Secretary may prescribe.

(b) Requirements for Authorizing Navigation. -- The Secretary may authorize navigation under this section only if the Secretary decides the authorization is --

(1) in the public interest; and

(2) consistent with any agreement between the Government and the government of a foreign country.

(c) Providing Air Commerce. -- The Secretary may authorize an aircraft permitted to navigate in the United States under this section to provide air commerce in the United States. However, the aircraft may take on for compensation, at a place in the United States, passengers or cargo destined for another place in the United States only if --

(1) specifically authorized under section 40109(g) of this title; or

(2) under regulations the Secretary prescribes authorizing air carriers to provide otherwise authorized air transportation with foreign registered aircraft under lease or charter to them without crew.

(d) Permit Requirements Not Affected. -- This section does not affect section 41301 or 41302 of this title. However, a foreign air carrier holding a permit under section 41302 does not need to obtain additional authorization under this section for an operation authorized by the permit.

Sec. 41704. Transporting property not to be transported in aircraft cabins Under regulations or orders of the Secretary of Transportation, an air carrier shall transport as baggage the property of a passenger traveling in air transportation that may not be carried in an aircraft cabin because of a law or regulation of the United States. The carrier is liable to pay an amount not more than the amount declared to the carrier by that passenger for actual loss of, or damage to, the property caused by the carrier. The carrier may impose reasonable charges and conditions for its liability.

Sec. 41705. Discrimination against handicapped individuals In providing air transportation, an air carrier may not discriminate against an otherwise qualified individual on the following grounds:

(1) the individual has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

(2) the individual has a record of such an impairment.

(3) the individual is regarded as having such an impairment.

Sec. 41706. Prohibitions against smoking on scheduled flights

(a) General. -- An individual may not smoke in the

passenger cabin or lavatory of an aircraft on a scheduled airline flight segment in air transportation or intrastate air transportation that is --

(1) between places in a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or the Virgin Islands;

(2) between a place in any jurisdiction referred to in clause (1) of this subsection (except Alaska and Hawaii) and a place in any other of those jurisdictions; or

(3)(A) scheduled for not more than 6 hours' duration; and

(B)(i) between a place referred to in clause (1) of this subsection (except Alaska and Hawaii) and Alaska or Hawaii; or

(ii) between Alaska and Hawaii.

(b) Regulations. -- The Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe regulations necessary to carry out this section.

Sec. 41707. Incorporating contract terms into written instrument

To the extent the Secretary of Transportation prescribes by regulation, an air carrier may incorporate by reference in a ticket or written instrument any term of the contract for providing interstate air transportation.

Sec. 41708. Reports

(a) Application. -- To the extent the Secretary of Transportation finds necessary to carry out this subpart, this section and section 41709 of this title apply to a person controlling an air carrier or affiliated (within the meaning of section 11343(c) of this title) with a carrier.

(b) Requirements. -- The Secretary may require an air carrier or foreign air carrier --

(1)(A) to file annual, monthly, periodical, and special reports with the Secretary in the form and way prescribed by the Secretary; and

(B) to file the reports under oath;

(2) to provide specific answers to questions on which the Secretary considers information to be necessary; and

(3) to file with the Secretary a copy of each agreement, arrangement, contract, or understanding between the carrier and another carrier or person related to transportation affected by this subpart.

Sec. 41709. Records of air carriers

(a) Requirements. -- The Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe the form of records to be kept by an air carrier, including records on the movement of traffic, receipts and expenditures of money, and the time period during which the records shall be kept. A carrier may keep only records prescribed or approved by the Secretary. However, a carrier may keep additional records if the additional records do not impair the integrity of the records prescribed or approved by the Secretary and are not an unreasonable financial burden on the carrier.

(b) Inspection. -- (1) The Secretary at any time may --

(A) inspect the land, buildings, and equipment of an air carrier or foreign air carrier when necessary to decide under subchapter II of this chapter or section 41102,

41103, or 41302 of this title whether a carrier is fit, willing, and able; and

(B) inspect records kept or required to be kept by an air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent.

(2) The Secretary may employ special agents or auditors to carry out this subsection.

Sec. 41710. Time requirements

When a matter requiring action of the Secretary of Transportation is submitted under section 40109(a) or (c)-(h), 41309, or 42111 of this title and an evidentiary hearing --

(1) is ordered, the Secretary shall make a final decision on the matter not later than the last day of the 12th month that begins after the date the matter is submitted; or

(2) is not ordered, the Secretary shall make a final decision on the matter not later than the last day of the 6th month that begins after the date the matter is submitted.

Sec. 41711. Air carrier management inquiry and cooperation with other authorities

In carrying out this subpart, the Secretary of Transportation may --

(1) inquire into the management of the business of an air carrier and obtain from the air carrier, and a person controlling, controlled by, or under common control with the carrier, information the Secretary decides reasonably is necessary to carry out the inquiry;

(2) confer and hold a joint hearing with a State authority; and

(3) exchange information related to aeronautics with a government of a foreign country through appropriate departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the United States Government.

Sec. 41712. Unfair and deceptive practices and unfair methods of competition On the initiative of the Secretary of Transportation or the complaint of an air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent, and if the Secretary considers it is in the public interest, the Secretary may investigate and decide whether an air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent has been or is engaged in an unfair or deceptive practice or an unfair method of competition in air transportation or the sale of air transportation. If the Secretary, after notice and an opportunity for a hearing, finds that an air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent is engaged in an unfair or deceptive practice or unfair method of competition, the Secretary shall order the air carrier, foreign air carrier, or ticket agent to stop the practice or method.

Sec. 41713. Preemption of authority over prices, routes, and service

(a) Definition. -- In this section, "State" means a State, the District of Columbia, and a territory or possession of the United States.

(b) Preemption. -- (1) Except as provided in this

subsection, a State, political subdivision of a State, or political authority of at least 2 States may not enact or enforce a law, regulation, or other provision having the force and effect of law related to a price, route, or service of an air carrier that may provide air transportation under this subpart.

(2) Paragraph (1) of this subsection does not apply to air transportation provided entirely in Alaska unless the transportation is air transportation (except charter air transportation) provided under a certificate issued under section 41102 of this title.

(3) This subsection does not limit a State, political subdivision of a State, or political authority of at least 2 States that owns or operates an airport served by an air carrier holding a certificate issued by the Secretary of Transportation from carrying out its proprietary powers and rights.

## SUBCHAPTER II -- SMALL COMMUNITY AIR SERVICE

### Sec. 41731. Definitions

(a) General. -- In this subchapter --

(1) "eligible place" means a place in the United States that --

(A) was an eligible point under section 419 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 before October 1, 1988;

(B) received scheduled air transportation at any time after January 1, 1990; and

(C) is not listed in Department of Transportation Orders 89-9-37 and 89-12-52 as a place ineligible for compensation under this subchapter.

(2) "enhanced essential air service" means scheduled air transportation to an eligible place of a higher level or quality than basic essential air service described in section 41732 of this title.

(3) "hub airport" means an airport that each year has at least .25 percent of the total annual boardings in the United States.

(4) "nonhub airport" means an airport that each year has less than .05 percent of the total annual boardings in the United States.

(5) "small hub airport" means an airport that each year has at least .05 percent, but less than .25 percent, of the total annual boardings in the United States.

(b) Limitation on Authority To Decide a Place Not an Eligible Place. -- The Secretary of Transportation may not decide that a place described in subsection (a)(1) of this section is not an eligible place on the basis of a passenger subsidy at that place or on another basis that is not specifically stated in this subchapter.

### Sec. 41732. Basic essential air service

(a) General. -- Basic essential air service provided under section 41733 of this title is scheduled air transportation of passengers and cargo --

(1) to a hub airport that has convenient connecting or single-plane air service to a substantial number of destinations beyond that airport; or

(2) to a small hub or nonhub airport, when in Alaska or

when the nearest hub airport is more than 400 miles from an eligible place.

(b) Minimum Requirements. -- Basic essential air service shall include at least the following:

(1)(A) for a place not in Alaska, 2 daily round trips 6 days a week, with not more than one intermediate stop on each flight; or

(B) for a place in Alaska, a level of service at least equal to that provided in 1976 or 2 round trips a week, whichever is greater, except that the Secretary of Transportation and the appropriate State authority of Alaska may agree to a different level of service after consulting with the affected community.

(2) flights at reasonable times considering the needs of passengers with connecting flights at the airport and at prices that are not excessive compared to the generally prevailing prices of other air carriers for like service between similar places.

(3) for a place not in Alaska, service provided in an aircraft with an effective capacity of at least 15 passengers if the average daily boardings at the place in any calendar year from 1976-1986 were more than 11 passengers unless --

(A) that level-of-service requirement would require paying compensation in a fiscal year under section 41733(d) or 41734(d) or (e) of this title for the place when compensation otherwise would not have been paid for that place in that year; or

(B) the affected community agrees with the Secretary in writing to the use of smaller aircraft to provide service to the place.

(4) service accommodating the estimated passenger and property traffic at an average load factor, for each class of traffic considering seasonal demands for the service, of not more than --

(A) 50 percent; or

(B) 60 percent when service is provided by aircraft with more than 14 passenger seats.

(5) service provided in aircraft with at least 2 engines and using 2 pilots, unless scheduled air transportation has not been provided to the place in aircraft with at least 2 engines and using 2 pilots for at least 60 consecutive operating days at any time since October 31, 1978.

(6) service provided by pressurized aircraft when the service is provided by aircraft that regularly fly above 8,000 feet in altitude.

#### Sec. 41733. Level of basic essential air service

(a) Decisions Made Before October 1, 1988. -- For each eligible place for which a decision was made before October 1, 1988, under section 419 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, establishing the level of essential air transportation, the level of basic essential air service for that place shall be the level established by the Secretary of Transportation for that place by not later than December 29, 1988.

(b) Decisions Not Made Before October 1, 1988. -- (1) The

Secretary shall decide on the level of basic essential air service for each eligible place for which a decision was not made before October 1, 1988, establishing the level of essential air transportation, when the Secretary receives notice that service to that place will be provided by only one air carrier. The Secretary shall make the decision by the last day of the 6-month period beginning on the date the Secretary receives the notice. The Secretary may impose notice requirements necessary to carry out this subsection. Before making a decision, the Secretary shall consider the views of any interested community and the appropriate State authority of the State in which the community is located.

(2) Until the Secretary has made a decision on a level of basic essential air service for an eligible place under this subsection, the Secretary, on petition by an appropriate representative of the place, shall prohibit an air carrier from ending, suspending, or reducing air transportation to that place that appears to deprive the place of basic essential air service.

(c) Availability of Compensation. -- (1) If the Secretary decides that basic essential air service will not be provided to an eligible place without compensation, the Secretary shall provide notice that an air carrier may apply to provide basic essential air service to the place for compensation under this section. In selecting an applicant, the Secretary shall consider, among other factors --

(A) the demonstrated reliability of the applicant in providing scheduled air service;

(B) the contractual and marketing arrangements the applicant has made with a larger carrier to ensure service beyond the hub airport;

(C) the interline arrangements that the applicant has made with a larger carrier to allow passengers and cargo of the applicant at the hub airport to be transported by the larger carrier through one reservation, ticket, and baggage check-in;

(D) the preferences of the actual and potential users of air transportation at the eligible place, giving substantial weight to the views of the elected officials representing the users; and

(E) for an eligible place in Alaska, the experience of the applicant in providing, in Alaska, scheduled air service, or significant patterns of non-scheduled air service under an exemption granted under section 40109(a) and (c)-(h) of this title.

(2) Under guidelines prescribed under section 41737(a) of this title, the Secretary shall pay the rate of compensation for providing basic essential air service under this section and section 41734 of this title.

(d) Compensation Payments. -- The Secretary shall pay compensation under this section at times and in the way the Secretary decides is appropriate. The Secretary shall end payment of compensation to an air carrier for providing basic essential air service to an eligible place when the Secretary decides the compensation is no longer necessary to maintain basic essential air service to the place.

(e) Review. -- The Secretary shall review periodically the level of basic essential air service for each eligible place.

Based on the review and consultations with an interested community and the appropriate State authority of the State in which the community is located, the Secretary may make appropriate adjustments in the level of service.

Sec. 41734. Ending, suspending, and reducing basic essential air service

(a) Notice Required. -- An air carrier may end, suspend, or reduce air transportation to an eligible place below the level of basic essential air service established for that place under section 41733 of this title only after giving the Secretary of Transportation, the appropriate State authority, and the affected communities at least 90 days' notice before ending, suspending, or reducing that transportation.

(b) Continuation of Service for 30 Days After Notice Period. -- If at the end of the notice period under subsection (a) of this section the Secretary has not found another air carrier to provide basic essential air service to the eligible place, the Secretary shall require the carrier providing notice to continue to provide basic essential air service to the place for an additional 30-day period or until another carrier begins to provide basic essential air service to the place, whichever occurs first.

(c) Continuation of Service for Additional 30-Day Periods. -- If at the end of the 30-day period under subsection (b) of this section the Secretary decides another air carrier will not provide basic essential air service to the place on a continuing basis, the Secretary shall require the carrier providing service to continue to provide service for additional 30-day periods until another carrier begins providing service on a continuing basis. At the end of each 30-day period, the Secretary shall decide if another carrier will provide service on a continuing basis.

(d) Continuation of Compensation After Notice Period. -- If an air carrier receiving compensation under section 41733 of this title for providing basic essential air service to an eligible place is required to continue to provide service to the place under this section after the 90-day notice period under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall continue to pay that compensation after the last day of that period. The Secretary shall pay the compensation until the Secretary finds another carrier to provide the service to the place or the 90th day after the end of that notice period, whichever is earlier. If, after the 90th day after the end of the 90-day notice period, the Secretary has not found another carrier to provide the service, the carrier required to continue to provide that service shall receive compensation sufficient --

(1) to pay for the fully allocated actual cost to the carrier of performing the basic essential air service that was being provided when the 90-day notice was given under subsection (a) of this section plus a reasonable return on investment that is at least 5 percent of operating costs; and

(2) to provide the carrier an additional return that recognizes the demonstrated additional lost profits from opportunities foregone and the likelihood that those lost profits increase as the period during which the carrier is

required to provide the service continues.

(e) Compensation to Air Carriers Originally Providing Service Without Compensation. -- If the Secretary requires an air carrier providing basic essential air service to an eligible place without compensation under section 41733 of this title to continue providing that service after the 90-day notice period required by subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall provide the carrier with compensation after the end of the 90-day notice period that is sufficient --

(1) to pay for the fully allocated actual cost to the carrier of performing the basic essential air service that was being provided when the 90-day notice was given under subsection (a) of this section plus a reasonable return on investment that is at least 5 percent of operating costs; and

(2) to provide the carrier an additional return that recognizes the demonstrated additional lost profits from opportunities foregone and the likelihood that those lost profits increase as the period during which the carrier is required to provide the service continues.

(f) Finding Replacement Carriers. -- When the Secretary requires an air carrier to continue to provide basic essential air service to an eligible place, the Secretary shall continue to make every effort to find another carrier to provide at least that basic essential air service to the place on a continuing basis.

(g) Transfer of Authority. -- If an air carrier, providing basic essential air service under section 41733 of this title between an eligible place and an airport at which the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration limits the number of instrument flight rule takeoffs and landings of aircraft, provides notice under subsection (a) of this section of an intention to end, suspend, or reduce that service and another carrier is found to provide the service, the Secretary shall require the carrier providing notice to transfer any operational authority the carrier has to land or take off at that airport related to the service to the eligible place to the carrier that will provide the service, if --

(1) the carrier that will provide the service needs the authority; and

(2) the authority to be transferred is being used only to provide air service to the eligible place.

Sec. 41735. Enhanced essential air service

(a) Proposals. -- (1) A State or local government may submit a proposal to the Secretary of Transportation for enhanced essential air service to an eligible place for which basic essential air service is being provided under section 41733 of this title. The proposal shall --

(A) specify the level and type of enhanced essential air service the State or local government considers appropriate; and

(B) include an agreement related to compensation required for the proposed service.

(2) The agreement submitted under paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection shall provide that --

(A) the State or local government or a person pay 50

percent of the compensation required for the proposed service and the United States Government pay the remaining 50 percent; or

(B)(i) the Government pay 100 percent of the compensation; and

(ii) if the proposed service is not successful for at least a 2-year period under the criteria prescribed by the Secretary under paragraph (3) of this subsection, the eligible place is not eligible for air service or air transportation for which compensation is paid by the Secretary under this subchapter.

(3) The Secretary shall prescribe by regulation objective criteria for deciding whether enhanced essential air service to an eligible place under this section is successful in terms of --

(A) increasing passenger usage of the airport facilities at the place; and

(B) reducing the amount of compensation provided by the Secretary under this subchapter for that service.

(b) Decisions. -- Not later than 90 days after receiving a proposal under subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall --

(1) approve the proposal if the Secretary decides the proposal is reasonable; or

(2) if the Secretary decides the proposal is not reasonable, disapprove the proposal and notify the State or local government of the disapproval and the reasons for the disapproval.

(c) Compensation Payments. -- (1) The Secretary shall pay compensation under this section when and in the way the Secretary decides is appropriate. Compensation for enhanced essential air service under this section may be paid only for the costs incurred in providing air service to an eligible place that are in addition to the costs incurred in providing basic essential air service to the place under section 41733 of this title. The Secretary shall continue to pay compensation under this section only as long as --

(A) the air carrier maintains the level of enhanced essential air service;

(B) the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation under this section continues to pay the compensation; and

(C) the Secretary decides the compensation is necessary to maintain the service to the place.

(2) The Secretary may require the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation under this section to make advance payments or provide other security to ensure that timely payments are made.

(d) Review. -- (1) The Secretary shall review periodically the enhanced essential air service provided to each eligible place under this section.

(2) For service for which the Government pays 50 percent of the compensation, based on the review and consultation with the affected community and the State or local government or person paying the remaining 50 percent of the compensation, the Secretary shall make appropriate adjustments in the type and level of service to the place.

(3) For service for which the Government pays 100 percent

of the compensation, based on the review and consultation with the State or local government submitting the proposal, the Secretary shall decide whether the service has succeeded for at least a 2-year period under the criteria prescribed under subsection (a)(3) of this section. If unsuccessful, the place is not eligible for air service or air transportation for which compensation is paid by the Secretary under this subchapter.

(e) Ending, Suspending, and Reducing Air Transportation. -- An air carrier may end, suspend, or reduce air transportation to an eligible place below the level of enhanced essential air service established for that place by the Secretary under this section only after giving the Secretary, the affected community, and the State or local government or person paying compensation for that service at least 30 days' notice before ending, suspending, or reducing the service. This subsection does not relieve the carrier of an obligation under section 41734 of this title.

Sec. 41736. Air transportation to noneligible places

(a) Proposals and Decisions. -- (1) A State or local government may propose to the Secretary of Transportation that the Secretary provide compensation to an air carrier to provide air transportation to a place that is not an eligible place under this subchapter. Not later than 90 days after receiving a proposal under this section, the Secretary shall --

(A) decide whether to designate the place as eligible to receive compensation under this section; and

(B)(i) approve the proposal if the State or local government or a person is willing and able to pay 50 percent of the compensation for providing the transportation, and notify the State or local government of the approval; or

(ii) disapprove the proposal if the Secretary decides the proposal is not reasonable under paragraph (2) of this subsection, and notify the State or local government of the disapproval and the reasons for the disapproval.

(2) In deciding whether a proposal is reasonable, the Secretary shall consider, among other factors --

(A) the traffic-generating potential of the place;

(B) the cost to the United States Government of providing the proposed transportation; and

(C) the distance of the place from the closest hub airport.

(b) Approval for Certain Air Transportation. --

Notwithstanding subsection (a)(1)(B) of this section, the Secretary shall approve a proposal under this section to compensate an air carrier for providing air transportation to a place in the 48 contiguous States or the District of Columbia and designate the place as eligible for compensation under this section if --

(1) at any time before October 23, 1978, the place was served by a carrier holding a certificate under section 401 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958;

(2) the place is more than 50 miles from the nearest small hub airport or an eligible place;

(3) the place is more than 150 miles from the nearest hub airport; and

(4) the State or local government submitting the proposal or a person is willing and able to pay 25 percent of the cost of providing the compensated transportation.

(c) Level of Air Transportation. -- (1) If the Secretary designates a place under subsection (a)(1) of this section as eligible for compensation under this section, the Secretary shall decide, not later than 6 months after the date of the designation, on the level of air transportation to be provided under this section. Before making a decision, the Secretary shall consider the views of any interested community, the appropriate State authority of the State in which the place is located, and the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation for the transportation under subsection (b)(4) of this section.

(2) After making the decision under paragraph (1) of this subsection, the Secretary shall provide notice that any air carrier that is willing to provide the level of air transportation established under paragraph (1) for a place may submit an application to provide the transportation. In selecting an applicant, the Secretary shall consider, among other factors --

(A) the factors listed in section 41733(c)(1) of this title; and

(B) the views of the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation for the transportation.

(d) Compensation Payments. -- (1) The Secretary shall pay compensation under this section when and in the way the Secretary decides is appropriate. The Secretary shall continue to pay compensation under this section only as long as --

(A) the air carrier maintains the level of air transportation established by the Secretary under subsection (c)(1) of this section;

(B) the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation for transportation under this section continues to pay that compensation; and

(C) the Secretary decides the compensation is necessary to maintain the transportation to the place.

(2) The Secretary may require the State or local government or person agreeing to pay compensation under this section to make advance payments or provide other security to ensure that timely payments are made.

(e) Review. -- The Secretary shall review periodically the level of air transportation provided under this section. Based on the review and consultation with any interested community, the appropriate State authority of the State in which the community is located, and the State or local government or person paying compensation under this section, the Secretary may make appropriate adjustments in the level of transportation.

(f) Withdrawal of Eligibility Designations. -- After providing notice and an opportunity for interested persons to comment, the Secretary may withdraw the designation of a place under subsection (a)(1) of this section as eligible to receive compensation under this section if the place has received air transportation under this section for at least 2 years and the Secretary decides the withdrawal would be in the public

interest. The Secretary by regulation shall prescribe standards for deciding whether the withdrawal of a designation under this subsection is in the public interest. The standards shall include the factors listed in subsection (a)(2) of this section.

(g) Ending, Suspending, and Reducing Air Transportation. -- An air carrier providing air transportation for compensation under this section may end, suspend, or reduce that transportation below the level of transportation established by the Secretary under this section only after giving the Secretary, the affected community, and the State or local government or person paying compensation under this section at least 30 days' notice before ending, suspending, or reducing the transportation.

Sec. 41737. Compensation guidelines, limitations, and claims

(a) Compensation Guidelines. -- (1) The Secretary of Transportation shall prescribe guidelines governing the rate of compensation payable under this subchapter. The guidelines shall be used to determine the reasonable amount of compensation required to ensure the continuation of air service or air transportation under this subchapter. The guidelines shall --

(A) provide for a reduction in compensation when an air carrier does not provide service or transportation agreed to be provided;

(B) consider amounts needed by an air carrier to promote public use of the service or transportation for which compensation is being paid; and

(C) include expense elements based on representative costs of air carriers providing scheduled air transportation of passengers, property, and mail on aircraft of the type the Secretary decides is appropriate for providing the service or transportation for which compensation is being provided.

(2) Promotional amounts described in paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection shall be a special, segregated element of the compensation provided to a carrier under this subchapter.

(b) Required Finding. -- The Secretary may pay compensation to an air carrier for providing air service or air transportation under this subchapter only if the Secretary finds the carrier is able to provide the service or transportation in a reliable way.

(c) Claims. -- Not later than 15 days after receiving a written claim from an air carrier for compensation under this subchapter, the Secretary shall --

(1) pay or deny the United States Government's share of a claim; and

(2) if denying the claim, notify the carrier of the denial and the reasons for the denial.

(d) Authority To Make Agreements and Incur Obligations. --

(1) The Secretary may make agreements and incur obligations from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund established under section 9502 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 9502) to pay compensation under this subchapter. An agreement by the Secretary under this subsection is a contractual obligation of the Government to pay the Government's share of the compensation.

(2) Not more than \$38,600,000 is available to the

Secretary out of the Fund for each of the fiscal years ending September 30, 1993-1998, to incur obligations under this section. Amounts made available under this section remain available until expended.

Sec. 41738. Fitness of air carriers

Notwithstanding section 40109(a) and (c)-(h) of this title, an air carrier may provide air service to an eligible place or air transportation to a place designated under section 41736 of this title only when the Secretary of Transportation decides that --

- (1) the carrier is fit, willing, and able to perform the service or transportation; and
- (2) aircraft used to provide the service or transportation, and operations related to the service or transportation, conform to the safety standards prescribed by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Sec. 41739. Air carrier obligations

If at least 2 air carriers make an agreement to operate under or use a single carrier designator code to provide air transportation, the carrier whose code is being used shares responsibility with the other carriers for the quality of transportation provided the public under the code by the other carriers.

Sec. 41740. Joint proposals

The Secretary of Transportation shall encourage the submission of joint proposals by 2 or more air carriers for providing air service or air transportation under this subchapter through arrangements that maximize the service or transportation to and from major destinations beyond the hub.

Sec. 41741. Insurance

The Secretary of Transportation may pay an air carrier compensation under this subchapter only when the carrier files with the Secretary an insurance policy or self-insurance plan approved by the Secretary. The policy or plan must be sufficient to pay for bodily injury to, or death of, an individual, or for loss of or damage to property of others, resulting from the operation of aircraft, but not more than the amount of the policy or plan limits.

Sec. 41742. Ending effective date

This subchapter is not effective after September 30, 1998.