

# United States Senate

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September 18, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

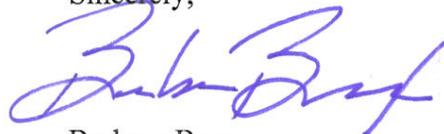
A recent incident that resulted in a young man with Down syndrome and his parents being denied the opportunity to board a plane served as an unfortunate reminder of the difficulties and humiliation that people with disabilities and their family members too often have while traveling. I write to you today to urge you to ensure that air carriers are meeting their responsibilities to train their staff to be sensitive and responsive to their customers with Down syndrome and other disabilities.

As you know, the Air Carrier Access Act includes strong protections for airline passengers with disabilities, including a requirement for air carriers to train their staff in serving customers with disabilities. As part of their ongoing enforcement of this law, Department of Transportation staff regularly audit air carrier training programs and reporting procedures to ensure that carriers are complying with this important law.

While I commend the swift work of your Aviation Consumer Protection Division staff in initiating an investigation of this incident, I ask that the Department engage now with the National Down Syndrome Society and other advocates to ensure that the training air carrier employees are receiving is adequate.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. Please let me know your decision and I look forward to working with you to ensure all airline passengers and their families are able to travel safely and fairly across our nation.

Sincerely,



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator