

AIRLINES

Americans Support Fining Airlines for Long Tarmac Delays

A majority of respondents agree with airlines forcing obese passengers to buy two seats in order to board a plane.

[NEW YORK – Feb. 23, 2010] – A majority of Americans welcome a decision to fine airlines that force passengers to remain inside an airplane on the tarmac for an extended period, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,010 American adults, 58 per cent of respondents agree with the federal government's decision to fine airlines \$27,500 per passenger for long tarmac delays.

In December, the Department of Transportation announced the new regulation, which is expected to come into force on Apr. 29.

Under the new guidelines, an airline will be fined \$27,500 per passenger for any tarmac delay of three hours or longer. For a plane carrying 100 passengers, a single violation could result in a \$2.75 million fine.

Seats

Earlier this month, film director Kevin Smith expressed dismay after being asked to leave a Southwest Airlines flight because the pilot believed Smith did not fit appropriately into one seat.

For more than 20 years, Southwest Airlines has had a "customer of size policy", which requires passengers to buy a second seat on a full plane if their body crosses the armrest boundary.

KEY FINDINGS

- **58% agree with the federal government's decision to fine airlines \$27,500 per passenger for long tarmac delays**
- **52% agree with airlines forcing obese passengers to buy two seats in order to board a plane**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From February 19 to February 21, 2010, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,010 randomly selected American adults who are Springboard USA panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of the United States. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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In the survey, 52 per cent of Americans agree with airlines forcing obese passengers to buy two seats in order to board a plane, while 39 per cent disagree.

While men clearly favor the policy (60% agree, 34% disagree), women are evenly divided in their assessment (45% agree, 44% disagree).

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Airlines

The federal government announced in December that it would fine airlines \$27,500 per passenger for long tarmac delays. Do you support or oppose this measure?

	Region				
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Strongly support	29%	33%	28%	28%	30%
Moderately support	29%	31%	30%	29%	28%
Moderately oppose	13%	15%	13%	15%	9%
Strongly oppose	11%	9%	10%	12%	12%
Not sure	18%	12%	19%	17%	21%

Airlines

The federal government announced in December that it would fine airlines \$27,500 per passenger for long tarmac delays. Do you support or oppose this measure?

	Gender		Age		
	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly support	33%	25%	23%	31%	33%
Moderately support	33%	26%	30%	29%	29%
Moderately oppose	13%	13%	17%	13%	9%
Strongly oppose	11%	11%	10%	9%	14%
Not sure	10%	25%	20%	18%	14%

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Airlines					
Do you agree or disagree with airlines forcing obese passengers to buy two seats in order to board a plane?					
Region					
	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Strongly agree	24%	20%	26%	23%	24%
Moderately agree	28%	34%	24%	26%	31%
Moderately disagree	16%	18%	17%	16%	14%
Strongly disagree	23%	24%	22%	26%	20%
Not sure	9%	4%	11%	9%	11%

Airlines					
Do you agree or disagree with airlines forcing obese passengers to buy two seats in order to board a plane?					
Gender			Age		
	Men	Women	18-34	35-54	55+
Strongly agree	28%	20%	27%	19%	27%
Moderately agree	32%	25%	30%	28%	25%
Moderately disagree	13%	19%	16%	17%	16%
Strongly disagree	21%	25%	18%	26%	25%
Not sure	6%	11%	9%	10%	7%

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Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election. More information on our electoral record can be found at:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/record-of-accuracy>

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at
<http://www.visioncritical.com/what-we-do/practices/angus-reid-public-opinion/>

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**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:
<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

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