PRESS RELEASE

CARGO AIRLINE ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR CONTINUATION OF OPEN SKIES POLICY TO PROTECT AMERICAN JOBS IN WORLDWIDE MARKETS

Washington, D.C. – May 14, 2015, For Immediate Release -- The Cargo Airline Association, the voice of the nation’s all-cargo air carrier industry, calls on the United States Government to maintain its policy of promoting competition by continuing to negotiate and abide by Open Skies agreements with trading partners around the world and by rejecting attempts to turn back the clock to a bygone era of government protectionism.

Members of the U.S. all-cargo industry, relying on Open Skies agreements negotiated by the United States with 115 countries around the world under longstanding U.S. aviation policy, have established worldwide networks designed to provide time-definite delivery of high value goods such as medical devices, pharmaceuticals, computers and computer parts, and health care products to customers around the globe. These carriers employ over 760,000 individuals and these jobs will be in jeopardy if any action is taken to limit competitive opportunities and restrict the ability of carriers to operate, not only between countries that are parties to Open Skies agreements, but also beyond those countries to other areas of the globe.

Although the current debate over international air transportation opportunities is being framed as a dispute about alleged government subsidies to Gulf States carriers, "beyond rights" themselves are actually under attack. And, unlike the passenger carriers with their code share agreements and immunized worldwide alliances, all-cargo carriers depend on the “beyond rights” in Open Skies agreements to achieve worldwide coverage. "It is not an overstatement that, absent Open Skies agreements, existing worldwide air cargo networks could not exist as we know them today", said Stephen A. Alterman, President of the Cargo Airline Association. “Unilaterally freezing foreign carrier services or otherwise acting at odds with Open Skies agreements would invite retaliatory measures and threaten U.S. commerce”, he added.

The claims of unfair competition made by several legacy U.S. passenger airlines and their supporters need to be taken seriously and evaluated thoroughly. The Departments of Transportation, State and Commerce have now established a public process for that purpose. The process should not be short-circuited by attempts to force U.S. action before the complaints are even heard and all parties have had the opportunity to comment. Such action would alienate supportive foreign governments and could be detrimental to the U.S. economy by harming all-cargo carriers.

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1 Direct air carrier members of the Cargo Airline Association are ABX Air, Atlas Air, FedEx Express, Kalitta Air and UPS.