



Dear AFM Members,

Following the passage of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (H.R. 658), we have been receiving many questions about the new policy and complaints that musicians are still experiencing problems at the airport. While the inclusion of a national musical instrument policy in the FAA bill is a major victory for AFM, musicians must be aware that changes will not happen immediately, and we ask for your patience.

The FAA reauthorization was signed into law by the President on February 14, 2012. However, the national instrument policy goes into effect upon issuance of FAA regulations to carry out the law, which must occur no later than February 2014. AFM is working with Congress, the FAA, and the airlines to get these regulations in place as soon as possible, and to encourage airlines that have not already done so to voluntarily adopt H.R. 658 as their policy in the meantime. This means that you may continue to face difficulties at the airport until the new procedures are fully rolled out.

In particular, please remember that flight attendants, gate attendants, and baggage handlers may not yet be aware of the new law. Often, they don't know the airline's own policy on musical instruments. In order for the carry-on policy to be effective, it is imperative that it be included in the FAA training manuals distributed to airline employees. As many of you have no doubt experienced, even airlines like United and Delta, which already have favorable musical instrument policies, frequently cause problems for musicians because the airline employees are unaware of the policy and refuse to allow the instrument on board. To address this issue, AFM is working to ensure that training manuals are updated as soon as possible.

Musicians who travel with their instruments are advised to visit the AFM website, where they can find the text of the law, links to major airlines' current musical instrument policies, and updated travel tips at <http://www.afm.org/member/page/id/1705>. I recommend that you carry both the airline's current policy on musical instruments and a copy of the law when you fly.

Best,

Hal

Hal Ponder
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