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Legislation Proposal

Passenger Aviation Communication and Coordination Act of 2026

United States Congress

Bill Number: _____

Introduced By: Adhvaith Ananth, The Institute for Youth in Policy

Date Introduced: 12 August 2026

A BILL

To improve passenger communication, airport coordination, and security preparedness throughout the United States aviation system.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

Section 1. Title.

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Passenger Aviation Communication and Coordination Act of 2026."

Section 2. Findings and Purpose.

(a) Findings:

- ***WHEREAS**, the United States aviation system serves hundreds of millions of passengers each year, and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported that U.S. airlines carried approximately 92.2 million scheduled-service passengers in July 2025 alone;*
- ***WHEREAS**, the Transportation Security Administration screened nearly 3 million passengers on August 29, 2025, demonstrating the large number of travelers who must understand and move efficiently through airport security procedures;*
- ***WHEREAS**, passengers currently receive important information from separate sources, including airline applications, airport websites, Transportation Security Administration resources, and U.S. Department of Transportation consumer-protection resources;*
- ***WHEREAS**, passengers experiencing delays, cancellations, tight connections, baggage problems, or unfamiliar airports may have difficulty locating and understanding the information necessary to make decisions during their trip;*
- ***WHEREAS**, first-time travelers, elderly passengers, international travelers, passengers with disabilities, families, and travelers with limited English proficiency may face additional difficulties when important information is fragmented or unclear;*
- ***WHEREAS**, the Department of Transportation already requires airlines in certain circumstances to communicate flight cancellations, significant changes, and passenger refund rights, demonstrating that clear passenger-notification requirements can be incorporated into the existing aviation system;*
- ***WHEREAS**, airport security can operate more efficiently when passengers receive clear information about identification requirements, baggage restrictions, liquids, electronics, prohibited items, accessibility assistance, and other screening procedures before reaching a checkpoint; and*
- ***WHEREAS**, international aviation already relies on common standards developed through organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization, demonstrating that countries can coordinate aviation procedures while maintaining control over their own laws and security requirements.*

(b) Purpose:

The purpose of this Act is to establish a coordinated passenger communication framework that makes essential aviation information easier to access and understand.

This Act shall:

1. establish common categories of passenger information across airlines and participating airports;
2. improve communication concerning delays, cancellations, connections, baggage, security, accessibility, passenger rights, and airport pickup;
3. establish a pilot program to test improved passenger communication systems at major U.S. airports;
4. improve coordination between the Department of Transportation, Transportation Security Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, airlines, and airports; and
5. encourage the United States to promote compatible passenger communication practices internationally.

Section 3. Definitions.

For purposes of this Act:

(a) "Covered air carrier" means a United States or foreign air carrier providing scheduled passenger air transportation to, from, or within the United States.

(b) "Participating airport" means an airport voluntarily participating in the pilot program created under Section 4 of this Act.

(c) "Passenger communication information" means information provided to passengers concerning flight status, delays, cancellations, gates, terminals, connections, baggage, security preparation, accessibility, passenger rights, ground transportation, and airport pickup.

(d) "Connection advisory" means an informational estimate intended to help a passenger evaluate a connecting itinerary based on available factors such as remaining connection time, terminal location, security requirements, customs or immigration processing, and known travel disruptions. A connection advisory shall be considered guidance and shall not constitute a guarantee that a passenger will make or miss a connection.

(e) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Transportation.

Section 4. Provisions.

(a) National Passenger Communication Standard

Not later than **18 months after enactment**, the Secretary of Transportation, in consultation with the Transportation Security Administration, Federal Aviation Administration, air carriers, airports, disability advocates, and passenger representatives, shall establish a Passenger Communication Standard.

The standard shall establish consistent categories through which covered air carriers and participating airports may communicate:

1. flight delays and cancellations;
2. gate and terminal changes;
3. boarding information;
4. baggage status;
5. connection advisories;
6. security preparation information;
7. accessibility and passenger-assistance information;
8. applicable rebooking, refund, and passenger-rights information; and
9. airport pickup and ground transportation information.

This Act shall **not require airlines or airports to use one government application or replace their existing applications**. Instead, information shall be structured so that existing airline and airport systems can provide the required categories in a clear and consistent manner.



(b) Security Preparedness Integration

The Transportation Security Administration shall develop a standardized digital source for current passenger security guidance that may be incorporated into airline and airport communication systems.

Such guidance shall include, when applicable:

1. acceptable identification requirements;
2. liquids and carry-on restrictions;
3. prohibited items;
4. electronics procedures;
5. accessibility and TSA Cares assistance;
6. recommended security preparation; and
7. other information determined necessary by the Transportation Security Administration.

No provision of this Act shall require the disclosure of classified information, Sensitive Security Information, or information that could reasonably compromise aviation security.



(c) Connection Advisories

Covered air carriers participating in the pilot program shall provide connection advisories when sufficient information is available.

Connection advisories may consider:

1. scheduled connection time;
2. known delays;
3. terminal or concourse changes;
4. airport-provided walking or transportation information;
5. security re-screening;
6. customs and immigration processing when applicable; and
7. known accessibility needs voluntarily provided by the passenger.

Connection advisories shall clearly state that conditions may change and that the advisory does not guarantee that a connection will be completed.



(d) Airport Pickup and Ground Transportation

Participating airports shall provide clear digital information concerning:

1. baggage claim locations;
2. passenger pickup zones;
3. cell phone waiting lots;
4. rideshare locations;
5. public transportation;
6. parking options; and
7. significant temporary changes affecting passenger pickup.

Participating systems may allow a passenger to voluntarily share basic trip-status information with a family member or pickup driver, including statuses such as “landed,” “at gate,” “awaiting baggage,” and “ready for pickup.”

Continuous passenger location tracking shall **not** be required under this Act.

(e) Accessibility and Language Access

Passenger communication developed under this Act shall be made available in accessible formats consistent with applicable federal disability law.

The Secretary shall also develop guidance encouraging participating airlines and airports to provide essential passenger information in languages commonly used by travelers at each participating airport.

Important information shall not be limited exclusively to smartphone applications and should be available through additional methods such as text messages, websites, kiosks, airport displays, or employee assistance when practical.

(f) Passenger Communication Pilot Program

Not later than **12 months after enactment**, the Secretary shall establish a **three-year Passenger Communication Pilot Program** at not fewer than **five major commercial airports**.

The Secretary shall seek airports representing different geographic regions and passenger volumes. The Secretary should seek the participation of **Dallas Fort Worth International Airport** as one of the pilot locations because of its role as a major domestic and international connecting airport.

Participating airports and airlines shall test the communication standards established by this Act.

The pilot program shall measure, to the extent practicable:

1. passenger satisfaction;
2. passenger complaints relating to unclear information;
3. missed connections associated with passenger confusion;
4. requests for assistance at airline service desks;
5. security-checkpoint problems caused by preventable passenger preparation errors;
6. baggage-information accuracy; and
7. curbside and pickup-area congestion.



(g) Evaluation

Not later than **six months after completion of the pilot program**, the Secretary shall submit a report to Congress describing:

1. the effectiveness of the program;
2. implementation costs;
3. effects on passengers, airports, airlines, and security operations;
4. accessibility outcomes;
5. privacy and cybersecurity concerns;
6. recommendations for nationwide implementation; and
7. recommendations for improving the Passenger Communication Standard.

(h) International Coordination

Following the pilot program, the Secretary of Transportation, in coordination with appropriate federal agencies, shall work through the **International Civil Aviation Organization and other appropriate international aviation forums** to encourage compatible passenger communication practices.

Nothing in this subsection shall require another country to change its security, immigration, customs, or consumer-protection laws.

The goal of international coordination shall be to make essential passenger information easier to understand across countries while allowing each nation to maintain authority over its own aviation policies.



Section 5. Enforcement and Implementation.

(a)

The **U.S. Department of Transportation** shall be the primary agency responsible for implementing and enforcing this Act.

(b)

The Department of Transportation shall coordinate with:

1. the Transportation Security Administration on security information;
2. the Federal Aviation Administration on airport participation;
3. participating airport authorities;
4. covered air carriers; and
5. other federal agencies when necessary.

(c)

The Secretary shall provide airlines and airports with technical guidance and reasonable implementation periods before enforcement begins.

(d)

Failure by a covered air carrier to comply with a final passenger communication requirement issued under this Act may be enforced using the Department of Transportation's existing aviation consumer-protection authority and applicable civil enforcement procedures.

(e)

The Secretary shall prioritize technical assistance and corrective action before penalties when a violation results from a temporary technology failure or other good-faith implementation problem.

Section 6. Appropriations.

There is authorized to be appropriated **$15,000,000 for fiscal years 2027 through 2029** to carry out this Act.

Funds may be used for:

1. development of the Passenger Communication Standard;
2. grants or technical assistance for participating airports;
3. cybersecurity and privacy safeguards;
4. accessibility improvements;
5. technology integration;
6. operation and evaluation of the pilot program; and
7. preparation of the final report to Congress.

No funds provided under this Act may be used to create a mandatory federal passenger-tracking system.

Section 7. Severability.

If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are severable.

Section 8. Effective Date.

This Act shall take effect **180 days after the date of enactment**.