Proposal to limit air travel inequities

An airline passenger boarding at Fargo's Hector Airport for a trip to New York pays 46 cents per mile to travel to Minneapolis, and then pays as little as 25.3 cents per mile for the rest of the excursion.

Disparities in air fares have proliferated since the federal Civil Aeronautics Board began lifting its regulating hand from commercial airlines 11 years ago, U.S. Sen. Mark Andrews of North Dakota said Wednesday. And, he said he wants the new Congress to consider some of the inequities when lawmakers reconvene in January.

Andrews presented his views recently to an international convention of airline managers meeting in Philadelphia—his "proposal is to narrow the range of fares an airline could offer to a certain percentage. No airline could offer a fare which was, for example, more than 30 percent more or less, on a per mile basis, than any other fare offered by the same airline. Andrews said he knows of a congressman from St. Louis, Mo., who buys a ticket for a flight from Washing- ton, D.C., to San Francisco on a super-discount rate. "Then, when the flight stops at St. Louis, he gets off the air-train and travels the rest of the ticket—and it's cheaper than buying a ticket for a Washington-to-St. Louis trip," he said.

"That is crazy," Andrews said. The senator said what is unfair is that airline passengers who are not flying among the major hubs where the dis- counts operate are forced to subsidize the super discounts.

"All I'm saying is 'let competition work,'" Andrews said. "If a lean, will- run airline can offer cheaper rates than the next airline—fine," he said, but passengers should not be forced to pay the airline's costs for fare wars in other markets.

Also, Andrews said, deregulation was intended to result in free competition among airlines. But, the largest airlines are taking deregulation as an opportunity to drive other airlines out of business by duplicating the smaller airlines' routes at cheaper rates. The predatory air fares are far below the airlines' cost of service, and the predatory airlines' customers on other routes are paying for the cheap rates between Andrews said he has no plan to author legislation curbing predatory air fares, but has talked to airport operators and others who are disturbed by the direction the fares are taking. He said he has addressed the problem with Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, R-Kan., who heads the subcommittee on air transportation for the Senate Commerce Committee.

Andrews' position is supported by Harold Vavra, executive director for the North Dakota Aeronautics Commis- sion. Vavra said deregulation has sparked a growing disparity between fares between major hub airports, such as New York, Chicago or Los Angeles, on the one hand, and fares for passengers boarding at smaller air- ports. He found some fares being offered by major airlines, such as the $99 one-way fare between New York and Los Angeles or San Francisco, amount to as much as $100 down. Meanwhile, a Fargoan pays 11 cents per mile to Los Angeles, a passenger boarding at Bis- marck, 13 cents per mile.

Vavra said the disparity is going to worsen because the CAB is still phasing out its control over airfares. After Dec. 31, he said, the fares will be sub- ject to no CAB influence, and the war among airlines for the major hub passengers is expected to intensify.

Vavra said the legislation proposed by Andrews recognizes the traditional variances in fares between major hubs and small airports. But, he said, a 30 to 40 percent variance in recognition that the airlines' cost of service are greater on short flight, or for flights with fewer passengers.

Andrews said the 30 percent variance is liberal. "Airline officials have claimed in the past that the differ- ence in cost between short and long flights is about 30 percent. That is, a stop adds about 30 percent to a flight's cost.

And, Vavra said airline officials themselves have acknowledged fares are not even covering costs for routes between major hubs where super dis- counts are offered.

That means most of the nation's airline passengers, boarding at small and medium-sized airports, are subsidizing the $99 fares between the East Coast and West Coast Vavra said.

Joe Parme, executive director for the Fargo Airport Authority, said air fares charged passengers out of North Dakota cities are "really exorbitant when compared to the cut rates people can get out of Minneapolis.

The air fare structure is keeping passengers off the ground between Fargo and Minneapolis. Parme said. A survey of local travel agents, conducted by the airport manager's office, found many travelers are driving to Min- neapolis to board flights at discounted rates, rather than boarding at Hector Airport, Parme said.

The Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission says Gov. Allen F. Olson's budget pro- posals would cut state aid to air- ports to about one-third of the present level to major North Dakota cities for airport projects.

Harold G. Vavra says that, for the coming biennium, the ex- ecutive budget is recommending about $1 million less in general fund appropriations for the Aeronautics Commission than it received for this purpose during the current biennium.

About 95% of the cut would be in general fund block grants for air- ports at Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Devils Lake, Jamestown and Williston. Vavra said. In the next biennium, Dickinson will not be involved in this cut, since it no longer has scheduled air service.

For instance, Vavra said, the Aeronautics Commission during the current biennium paid the Bismarck airport over $421,000. That would be reduced to about $136,000 and the others according- ly, he said.

The 1979 Legislature adopted a policy of having the state assist local taxpayers in supporting their major airports. Vavra added that he believes that's a good policy and expects city and airport officials to lobby the 1981 legislative session to continue the funding.
1982 sets record for state projects

In eleven months to December 1, 1982, the N.D. Aeronautics Commission provided 30% state matching funds totaling $60,000 for 60 general aviation airport improvement projects throughout North Dakota, according to Harold G. Vavra, director.

General Aviation airport improvements combining state and local airport funds was in excess of $1,178,000 in 1982. General Aviation airport projects were spread to airports in 28 out of North Dakota's 53 counties, or 52%, of all counties had at least one or more projects sponsored by either a municipal, county or a regional airport authority, Vavra said.

State share of the 50% funding level on these projects was generated internally by a 4 percent excise tax on the sales price of aviation gasoline and jet motor fuel, Vavra said.

There are a total of 50 general aviation airport improvement projects which have been granted funds by the Aeronautics Commission which have been carried over to 1983 for final completion such as asphalt paving and painting of centerlines and runways which could not be completed in 1982.

In addition the State Aeronautics Commission paid out in 1982 a total of $75,000 in state airport block grants, which were divided among the air carrier airports, for improvements at Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot and Williston. These funds came from the state general fund.

Total state dollars granted or paid to both air carrier and general aviation public airports for improvements total of $1,339,000 in the first eleven months of 1982, Vavra said.

Improvements at general aviation airports ranged from constructing new paved runways, taxiway and aprons at New Town and Lakota to major extension of a paved runway, apron and taxiway at Toyota to building pavements, runway crack sealing and seal coating of runways, taxiways and aprons to maintain the existing system of airports in North Dakota.

Taking into account both air carrier and general aviation public airports, the Aeronautics Commission in eleven months in 1982 granted or paid state funds to 60 public airports in 28 out of North Dakota's 53 counties for airport improvements or 46%, of all counties in the state had some improvements in 1982. 1983 was an all-time high for airport improvements with funding on a joint state-local level, Vavra said.

The material is designed, NATA says, "to help air taxi operators understand tax procedures more quickly and incorporate them into their financial systems smoothly."

To receive the material, call NATA's Washington, D.C. office at (202) 996-8800.

Aircraft and helicopters registered with the Aeronautics Commission in 1982 have set a record high, according to Harold G. Vavra, Director.

A total of 1,173 aircraft and helicopters have been registered in 1982 compared with 1,724 last year, an increase of 19 or 1.7%.

King Radio Corporation has put together the KNS-80 Integrated NAV system, KY 197/197, and KL 206 Indicator at a sale price. Plus Dakota Aero Tech will also discount the sale prices even further! Plus: Add AKT-86P ADP!

KNS-80
KYN 196
Total
$12,645.00
KLY 206
Total
$11,450.00
KR86
Total
$790.00

The current effort by NDAA to form a single association of aerial operators has set the stage for the group to seek a new home.

Depending on what happens at the upcoming annual meeting of NDAA with an attempt to merge the two associations, the FOB/AIR TAXI group along with the Airport Manager/Airport Authorities interests will have to take action to put together a formal association, elect some leadership and move forward with the business of representing their collective interests.

Recertification set

Pesticide recertification and update sessions for commercial ag applicators (both, aerial and ground) and for dealers for use of or sale of restricted pesticide chemicals and for initial certification of commercial applicators who have never been certified before, will be held as follows:

Recertification Only


<table>
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<th>Time</th>
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**Around the State**

MADDOCK ... recent airport inspection shows the runway shoulders are soft and dangerous. The center 12'-30' of the asphalt runway is firm. They also have trouble with the wiring so the runway lights are inoperative. The airport authority is challenged with searching for financial sources to repair the airport. Snow is plowed irregularly.

GARRISON ... has a new airport authority chairman, Lynn Boots. He has informed us that the airport has been using 18 watt 136 volt light bulbs for their low intensity light fixtures, because these last a lot longer and cost approximately the same. Possibility of an FBO in a few years increasing aviation activity for their community.

MOHAL ... has a new airport authority chairman who is also the airport manager. They will be installing an NDB next spring and planning for a crack fill project. Airport managers across North Dakota are noticing that in the cold weather the cracks are really opening up and are quite numerous. So start planning for later winter of early spring crack sealing while they are still open up. Contact the North Dakota Aeronautics commission on crack filling information and application for a grant for 50% cost sharing basis pending the approval of the Aeronautics Commission.

LANSFORD ... has a dual purpose airport also being used for a golf course. The surface is fair since golf courses tend to be watched over and given tender-loving care. Local CETA workers repaired the runway edge markers and painted them. Sunday breakfast fly-ins occur frequently in the summer.

GLENBURN ... has no snow removal available and confirm winter conditions with manager. Caution is advised to notice the obstructions on both runway ends before using. In order for runway lighting, a new site should be developed and hopefully the airport authority will be successful in selecting a new site. 

GLEN-ULLIN ... will be doing some preliminary planning this winter for resurfacing the longer runway. Highway 49 south of town may be overlaid next year and coordination with this contractor may produce a substantially lower bid for a new asphalt runway.

**Linrud to chair meeting**

President Larry Linrud, formerly of Wahpeton and now operating from Velva, will chair the annual meeting of NDAA, the state's recognized commercial aviation association. President Linrud, who played a major role in the development of Regional Airport, has set the next annual meeting of NDAA for 9:00 A.M. January 20, 1983 at the Kirk Motor Inn in Bismarck.

North Dakota Aviation Association Officers

President: Larry Linrud, Wahpeton, ND
Vice-President: Fred Anderson, Aviation Services Inc., Minot, ND
Treasurer: Arnie Widmer, Widmer Flying Service, Crete, ND
Secretary: Mike Hohl, Mayport Aviation, Mayville, ND

Immediate Past President: Bill Breda, Central Flying Service, Washburn, ND.
Executive Secretary: Jack Daniels, Ser-V-Air Accessories, Inc., Williston, ND.
Delegate to National Agricultural Assn.: Dan Thompson, Thompson Aerospray, Wyndmere, ND.

**Funding OKs funding**

The Federal Aviation Administration announced that it has signed grant agreements for 1982 fiscal year federal and airport funds with a number of airports in North Dakota for improvements. Federal funds pay 90 percent of project costs as follows:
1. Grand Forks International Airport: $2,438,137 for parallel GA runway.
2. Bismarck Municipal Airport: 445,000 for improvements.
3. Minot International Airport: $204,735 for improvements.

Total: $7,900,860

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**NDAAA meeting agenda**

Wednesday, January 19
6:30 to 9 p.m.
Thursday, January 20
7:30
9:00
No host social hour, snacks by NDAAA
Continental breakfast, purchase tickets as you enter
Annual Meeting
The future of NDAAA
President's report
Treasurer's report
General business
12:00
Luncheon, purchase tickets as you enter
2:00
Formation of the future
Report on legislation
Appointment of lobbyist
Discussion of by law, dues, membership

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