



The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
 Ranking Member
 Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

August 17, 2010

Dear Senator Hutchison:

We write to express our concern that the final Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill may include a permanent legislative ban on all voice communications on commercial flights. Passengers, businesses and a host of other national technology organizations publicly oppose this. The ban would put the United States at a competitive disadvantage to the rest of the world by denying passengers a service currently enjoyed by the rest of the globe, thus blocking access to a significant and fast-growing multibillion global marketplace.

Presently, passenger use of cellphones on commercial flights is commonplace all over the world – except in the United States. After only two years of operation there are 20,000 commercial flights on 22 different airlines going to over 280 destinations in 72 nations monthly with aircraft equipped with inflight voice connectivity on a passenger’s cellphone. As a result, nearly 3 million passengers each month are exposed to inflight voice services. There have been no complaints from passengers or crew regarding the use of mobile phones on board an equipped aircraft. Many overseas airlines have committed investments in in-flight connectivity on the basis that they will provide voice, SMS and data services.

Banning an entire technology is an extreme policy, and we hope Congress will not do that. The Senate has the right approach, which relied on the existing regulatory process without an additional legislative layer. As you work through the August Work Period on the bill, we thank you for your continued support of inflight connectivity, which will enhance the passenger experience while flying on commercial aircraft.

Sincerely,



Paul Margis
CEO
Panasonic Avionics Corporation



Alan Pellegrini
Vice President, General Manager
Inflight Entertainment &
Communication
Thales Avionics, Inc.



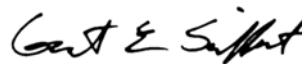
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