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AAFA Applauds DOT Warning About Denial of Preboarding to Family With Food Allergies

June 7, 2019 – Arlington, VA – The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) applauds the warning the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) issued to American Airlines in response to American Airline’s denial of the right to pre-board a family of a child with food allergies. However, AAFA calls on the USDOT and Congress to take even stronger actions to protect the rights of airline passengers with allergies and all disabilities.

“American failed to provide the MacKenzie family their rights that are clearly defined by the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA),” stated Kenneth Mendez, the president and chief executive officer of AAFA. “However, a warning from the USDOT is not enough to address this grievance. Congress must take action to give families like the MacKenzies the ability to take legal action to protect their rights.”

Specifically, AAFA has endorsed The “Airline Passenger Bill of Rights” introduced in the 115th Congress by Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Ed Markey (D-MA) that would reinstate the right of passengers with disabilities to sue airlines in federal court for denying basic access. Under current law, those with a medical disability who feel they experienced discrimination from an air carrier can only file a complaint with the USDOT. Unfortunately, the private right of action provisions included in this legislation were ultimately not adopted as part of the ACAA.

“We look forward to working with the offices of Senators Blumenthal and Markey to reintroduce a new Airline Passenger Bill of Rights that contains important protections for passengers with allergies,” stated Mendez.

About AAFA

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA provides practical information and community-based services through its digital communities and national network of local chapters and educational support groups. Through its Kids With Food Allergies division, AAFA offers the most extensive online support community for families raising children with food allergies. AAFA also helps consumers identify products suitable for those with asthma and allergies through the **asthma & allergy friendly®** Certification Program. For more information, visit www.aafa.org.

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