



November 28, 2011

Richard H. Anderson
Chief Executive Officer
Delta Airlines
1030 Delta Boulevard
Atlanta, GA. 30354-1989

Dear Mr. Anderson,

On behalf of Concerned Women for America's 500,000 members nationwide, I would like to suggest that Delta re-evaluate its participation in the SkyTeam alliance in light of the 2012 planned admission of Saudi Arabian Airlines into that alliance. I believe that the forthcoming partnership between Saudi Arabian Airlines and Delta would be inconsistent with the values and ethics to which Delta subscribes.

As a result of this alliance, Delta will sell tickets on Saudi Arabian Airlines to passengers travelling to or through Saudi Arabia. We strongly urge you consider the implications if Delta sold a ticket to a passenger traveling through a Saudi Arabian airport on his way to a third country, if that passenger were detained at the airport due to the public display of a Christian symbol. Please see the 2010 International Religious Freedom Report, issued by the U.S. Department of State and available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148843.htm>, which states as follows: "*The public practice of non-Muslim religions is prohibited in the Kingdom*" (emphasis mine). At a minimum, Delta would be obligated to forewarn its passengers traveling through Saudi Arabian airports concerning the Islamic prohibitions.

Would Delta find it consistent with its values to advise a passenger to avoid a public display of their religion, even if such advice is offered solely for the purpose of protecting the traveler?

Please also note that the Saudi Embassy requires disclosure of an applicant's religion, even when applying for a visa to simply pass through Saudi Arabia on the way to a third country. Transit visas are required by the Saudi government when a passenger with a confirmed itinerary to a third country remains in Saudi Arabia for over 18 hours and less than 72 hours. There has been considerable controversy concerning whether individuals who disclose their Jewish faith on their visa application will be permitted entry into Saudi Arabia. Once again, I would ask you to rethink the wisdom of selling tickets on Saudi Arabian Airlines, when there is considerable doubt as to whether a Jewish person can even obtain a transit visa through Saudi Arabia on their way to a third country unless they misrepresent their religious beliefs to the Saudi authorities.

I also find it morally repugnant that Delta would in any way profit from an alliance with a company owned by a government that so openly discriminates against women. In practice, the government discriminates not only against women in Saudi Arabia, but also against female travelers who are merely traveling through Saudi Arabia on their way to other countries. As an example, the following statement appears on the website of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington, D.C.: “*Ladies cannot apply for a transit visa if not accompanied by a male relative*” (emphasis mine). See http://www.saudiembassy.net/services/transit_visa.aspx (last visited Nov. 18, 2011).

The U.S. Department of State 2010 Report on Human Rights, available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/160475.pdf>, details the following shocking abuses of the fundamental rights of women in Saudi Arabia:

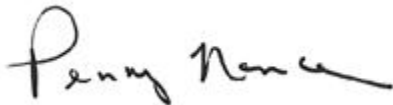
- In courts, the testimony of one man equals that of two women.
- By law a female rape victim is at fault for illegal “mixing of genders” and is punished along with the perpetrator.
- Women risk arrest for riding in a vehicle driven by a male who is not an employee or a close male relative.
- Women are prohibited from driving motor vehicles.
- In public places women must conceal their hair, cover their faces, and wear a loose-fitting, full-length black cloak covering the entire body.
- Women are restricted in their use of public facilities. Women must sit in separate, specially designated family sections when males who are not close relatives are present. They are not allowed to consume food in restaurants that do not have such sections.
- Women require a male guardian’s consent to have a passport and to obtain an exit visa to leave the country.
- The guardianship system also requires a woman to have the permission of her male guardian to study at the university, or move freely inside of the country. The law requires a woman to obtain the permission of her male guardian to work if the type of business is not “deemed appropriate for a woman.”
- A National Identification Card (NIC), which is required to conduct most official and public transactions, may be issued to a woman only if consent is given in writing by her male guardian.
- Under inheritance laws, daughters receive half the inheritance awarded to their brothers.

- Women must demonstrate significant cause to obtain a divorce, while men are not required to do so.
- Classroom instruction in the Kingdom is segregated by sex.
- Girls as young as 10 years old may be married in the Kingdom.

As an organization, Concerned Women for America is deeply sensitive to the national security implications of the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and we would do nothing which would in any manner undermine that relationship. However, Delta's relationship with Saudi Arabian Airlines has no national security implications, but is instead based solely on considerations of a purely commercial nature. As such, we do not believe that Delta's business interests can overcome the morally objectionable nature of an alliance with an airline owned by the government of Saudi Arabia, which enforces cruel and inhumane laws against women, as well as against individuals who are not of the Islamic faith.

In light of the above, we respectfully urge Delta to reconsider its participation in the SkyTeam alliance, if Saudi Arabian Airlines is admitted into that alliance in 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Penny Nance". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Penny Nance
Chief Executive Officer and President
Concerned Women for America