

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee



Meeting of the Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee (ACPAC)
Speakers Biographical Information
June 28, 2022

John Putnam, DOT General Counsel

John Putnam is the General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Transportation. He was confirmed by the US Senate and sworn in as General Counsel in May 2022, and initially joined the Biden Administration as the Department's Deputy General Counsel on January 20, 2021. In this role, he works closely with the Department's senior leadership and nearly 500 attorneys to manage legal and policy matters concerning all of the Department's operating administrations.

Prior to joining the Biden Administration, John worked most of his career as a transportation, environment, and energy attorney in Denver and Washington, DC. He represented State departments of transportation, local governments, transportation agencies, and private entities in Colorado and nationwide on a range of transportation, energy, environmental issues under the Federal transportation laws, the Clean Air Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Clean Water Act.

Immediately prior to joining the Department, John was the Director of Environmental Programs for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). John also served as chair and member of the Regional Air Quality Council, which is the lead air quality planning agency for the Denver metropolitan area and North Front Range, as well as chair of the Boulder Planning Board and Boulder Board of Open Space Trustees. He served as a consulted expert or committee member for projects for the United States Government Accountability Office, the Transportation Research Board, the National Academies, and Airports Council International. John received his law degree from the University of Chicago and Bachelor's degree from Williams College.

Rob Gorman, DOT Senior Trial Attorney

Rob Gorman is a Senior Trial Attorney with the Department's Office of Aviation Consumer Protection. Rob has been responsible for a variety of enforcement and rulemaking matters, including rules relating to unfair and deceptive practices and accessibility of air transportation. Before joining DOT, Rob worked in private practice for three years, and for 15 years as a career law clerk for Pennsylvania's appellate courts.

Charles Leocha, President and Co-Founder of Travelers United

Charles Leocha is the President and Co-Founder of Travelers United. He has been working in Washington, DC since 2009 with Congress, the Department of Transportation, and industry stakeholders on travel issues. He was the consumer representative to the Advisory Committee for Aviation Consumer Protection from 2012 to 2018, appointed by the Secretary of Transportation. He also served on the Consumer Advocacy Subcommittee of the Transportation Security Advisory Board. Charlie worked as a travel journalist since 1986. Today, his focus is competition, comparison shopping, airline price transparency, passenger rights education, privacy, re-imagining TSA search processes, facial recognition, UAS integration, and air traffic control developments.

Andrew Appelbaum, Attorney for FlyersRights.org

Andrew Appelbaum is an attorney for FlyersRights.org with five years of experience focused on aviation consumer protection. He is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center and received a Bachelor of Science in Economics from American University. He is the co-author of several aviation safety publications and of counsel on several aviation safety and consumer protection matters in the federal courts.

Diana Moss, President of the American Antitrust Institute

Diana Moss became the President of the American Antitrust Institute in January 2015 and has been with AAI since 2001. Her work spans both antitrust and regulation, with industry expertise in digital technology, electricity, petroleum, food and agriculture, airlines, telecommunications, and healthcare. From 1995 to 2001, Dr. Moss served in the Office of Economic Policy and Office of Markets, Tariffs, and Rates at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and prior to that, she consulted in private practice in the areas of regulation and antitrust. Dr. Moss is also Adjunct Faculty in the Department of Economics at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Moss has spoken widely on various topics involving competition policy and enforcement, testified before Congress, appeared before state and federal regulatory commissions, at industry and academic conferences, and made numerous radio and television appearances. She has published articles in numerous economic and legal journals, is editor of Network Access, Regulation and Antitrust, and has contributed chapters to The Structure of American Industry and the Global Competition Review's (GCR's) The Guide to Merger Remedies. She holds an M.A. from the University of Denver and a Ph.D. from the Colorado School of Mines.

Doug Lavin, Vice President, Member and External Relations, North America, of the International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Doug Lavin is the Vice President, Member and External Relations, North America of the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Doug represents the interests of IATA's 290 international airline members both in the United States and Canada and is the head of IATA's Washington, D.C. office. He and his team address a number of issues impacting our member airlines, including safety, security, facilitation and environment, consumer protection and disability rights, economic regulation, charges, taxes, distribution and, today, all issues related to COVID-19 and the industry restart. Doug's career has included work in both public and private sectors. He joined IATA from the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) where he was the Assistant Administrator for International Aviation from 2003 to 2005. Immediately prior to the FAA, Doug was Vice President of Portfolio Management for American Express. Doug is a graduate of the Boston University School of Law, where he was a member of the law review, and the University of New Hampshire.

Neil Geurin, Managing Director of Digital Customer Experience and Distribution Strategy at American Airlines

Neil Geurin leads the Airline Retailing organization for AA, building both critical relationships and critical technology that impact customer experience with American. Neil works with partners who cover distribution initiatives, improvements to our direct channels and our efforts to assist new start up technologies that could change the future for the industry.

Neil joined AA in 2002 and his time at American has been spent in a variety of roles, from driving email marketing strategy in our Loyalty team to managing pricing and yield management for AA's Pacific network. During his time in revenue management, he was responsible for launching the revenue management component of AA's joint business with Japan Airlines. In 2012 he joined the Sales Strategy organization and had the opportunity to help guide our approach to Corporate and Agency partners through a dynamic period that included the merger of American and U.S. Airways. Over the last few years Neil has guided our Digital and Distribution Strategy groups as we've made significant strides in the development of upgraded tools for customers and integration of New Distribution Capability (NDC) strategies.

Rana Ghosh, Vice President of Omnichannel at Spirit Airlines

Rana Ghosh is the Vice President of Omnichannel at Spirit Airlines, with responsibility for ancillary product development and management, the FreeSpirit loyalty program, performance across all digital channels - direct and indirect - and the Guest Care teams. In his 7 years at Spirit, he is thrilled to have been part of the radical transformation of the Guest Experience that has transpired during that time.

Mike Hecht, Managing Director of Product Development at Delta Air Lines

Michael Hecht is the Managing Director, Product Development at Delta Air Lines, where he leads a talented team of strategists responsible for creating, merchandising, and growing the suite of products and services offered by Delta worldwide. Since joining Delta in 2013, Michael has also held progressive roles in Customer Engagement & Loyalty. Prior to his current role, Michael led the team responsible for creating the most valuable co-brand credit card portfolio in the world, managed the airline's international airline loyalty partnerships, and led a team responsible for core loyalty program analytics, brand building, member communication, member benefits, and mileage redemption options. Before joining Delta, Michael was a management consultant at McKinsey & Co., Deloitte, and Seabury Group, advising clients across five continents on a variety of marketing, sales, strategy, and operations topics. Michael holds an MBA with Distinction from New York University and a BSBA from Washington University in St. Louis.

Eben Peck, Executive Vice President, Advocacy of the American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA)

Eben Peck is Executive Vice President, Advocacy of the American Society of Travel Advisors (ASTA) and has served in various government affairs and advocacy roles there since 2012. Currently, he is responsible for ASTA's work to advocate for the travel agency community at all levels of government, within the travel industry and before the traveling public. This includes management of ASTA's Government Affairs, Communications, Research and Legal functions. Prior to ASTA, he served on the staff of the Corporation of Public Broadcasting and U.S. Senator Olympia Snowe (R-ME). Between 2019 and 2020, Peck represented ASTA as the national travel organization representative on the U.S. Department of Transportation's In-Flight Sexual Misconduct Task Force and sits on the governing boards of the U.S. Travel Insurance Association and the California Coalition of Travel Organizations.

Mike Liptak, Vice President of Government Relations at The Travel Technology Association (Travel Tech)

Mike Liptak is Vice President of Government Relations at The Travel Technology Association (Travel Tech), where he manages a broad government and regulatory affairs portfolio in support of the independent travel distribution industry. Prior to joining Travel Tech, Mike spent five years as Director of Government Affairs for the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association, representing our nation's aggregate industry while highlighting the importance of maintaining and expanding a strong infrastructure throughout the United States. He also spent five years with a small, but aggressive consulting and lobbying firm developing strategies for policy implementation and identifying federal grant opportunities. Originally from Western Pennsylvania, Mike served as a legislative aide to U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell (KY) and worked on several House and Senate campaigns in Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Washington. He is a graduate of Grove City College.

Martin Nolan, General Counsel & Company Secretary at Skyscanner

Martin Nolan is Skyscanner's General Counsel & Company Secretary, responsible for all Legal, Public & Regulatory Affairs for the business. Having joined the company in 2017, Martin leads on all legal matters for the company, devises Skyscanner's Public and Regulatory Affairs strategy, and advises on matters of policy and regulation and potential impact on disruptive technology businesses, the platform economy and the travel industry. Martin is also responsible for helping to shape Skyscanner's products and services for compliance with all consumer-facing laws worldwide and is an advocate for Skyscanner's "traveler first" approach to technology in travel. Prior to joining Skyscanner, Martin was a General Counsel of a cyber security technologies business.

Kirsty Ireland, the Global Lead: Policy and Public Affairs at Skyscanner

Kirsty Ireland is the Global Lead: Policy and Public Affairs at Skyscanner. Having joined Skyscanner in 2013, Kirsty's role focuses on leading, shaping and executing the company's Public and Regulatory Affairs strategy globally. Her role within Public and Regulatory Affairs sees her devising strategy across a number of policy areas including aviation, digital technology, platform economy, and consumer regulation. The role sees her conducting regular engagement with policy makers and regulators at both national and regional levels. During her time at Skyscanner Kirsty has worked across multiple areas throughout the business, previously leading strategy and Communications for Skyscanner's Commercial and Business facing arm. Kirsty holds an MA in International Relations as well as a master's degree in Political Communications.

Phil Nicholas, Vice President, Chief Counsel and Head of Government Affairs for Amadeus North America

Phil Nicholas is Vice President, Chief Counsel and Head of Government Affairs for Amadeus North America, Inc., a subsidiary of Amadeus IT Group, S.A., a global leader in the travel IT sector. Phil has served as in-house counsel with Amadeus in a number of capacities for the past 24 years, overseeing Amadeus' legal operations in the Americas. Phil earned his law degree from the University of Miami where he also serves as an adjunct professor in the Litigation Skills and Business Law programs.