



October 6, 2026

Scott Kirby
Chief Executive Officer
United Airlines
233 S. Wacker Drive
Chicago IL, 60606

Dear Mr. Kirby:

This letter is regarding reports that a 25-year-old United Airlines passenger alerted flight attendants to the fact that her seatmate was performing a lewd act while staring at her and wanted to change her seat. While she was permitted to stand for part of the flight, she was required to return to her seat next to the perpetrator for landing¹. This raises serious questions about United Airlines' sexual misconduct protocol, as well as whether they value the safety of their passengers, specifically women passengers.

According to the woman, her discomfort about returning to her seat was ignored multiple times. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)- which has jurisdiction over crimes that happen on any aircraft that is in flight and will land in the U.S. or its next destination will be in the U.S.- a passenger who witnesses sexual misconduct should immediately notify the air crew². This story is all too familiar- a woman does what is considered "the right thing" and is still not taken seriously by those who are supposed to keep her safe.

Afterward, United Airlines merely awarded her an apology and a \$100 credit- for a \$400 trip. She has since filed a complaint against the airline and with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). In follow-up emails, United employees described the lewd sexual act as behavior that caused her concern³, rather than an act of sexual misconduct that is unacceptable regardless of

¹ [Woman recalls worst nightmare 'trapped' on Newark flight next to this man](#), NBC New York Staff, September 25, 2026, *NBC New York*.

² [Raising Awareness: Sexual Assault Aboard Aircraft](#), April 29, 2025, *Federal Bureau of Investigation*.

³ [United Airlines Investigating After Passenger "Trapped" Next to Man Allegedly Masturbating](#), Elise Sole, September 24, 2026, *Oxygen True Crime*.

who the man's seatmate is. This disgusting behavior is not a matter of personal disagreement between him and the woman who reported his behavior. Addressing this kind of behavior is essential to ensuring that women can live with safety and dignity. We call on United Airlines to do better, and to stand with survivors.

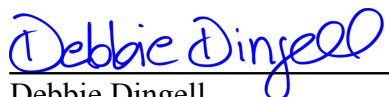
Based on the troubling information that has been released regarding this incident, we request your written answers to the following questions by **Friday, October 16, 2026**:

1. How does United Airlines define sexual misconduct? Did this incident meet United's definition of misconduct?
 - a. If not, is United willing to review and improve its current definition in coordination with experts in the field of sexual misconduct prevention and response?
2. Is it correct that the air crew did not report this incident to law enforcement, make accommodations for the woman who reported the behavior, or address the offender directly? If so, why not?
 - a. Does United have protocols in place to support individuals who report misconduct to the air crew but do not wish to escalate the issue to law enforcement?
3. What is the protocol for the air crew on United Airlines and affiliate flights to respond to reports of in-flight sexual misconduct?
 - a. How can United Airlines improve these protocols in order to enhance passenger safety?
4. How does United Airlines plan to improve training for air crews to ensure that they respond to future in-flight sexual misconduct reports in a timely, attentive manner that prioritizes the safety and dignity of passengers?
5. How do you plan to make women feel safe on a United Airlines flight going forward?

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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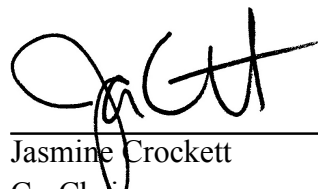


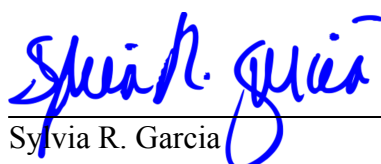
Debbie Dingell

Senate Liaison

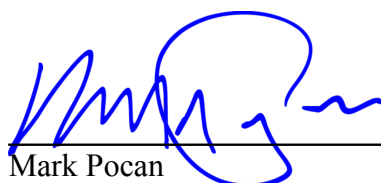
Democratic Women's Caucus


Joyce Beatty
National Leaders & Advocacy
Organizations Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus

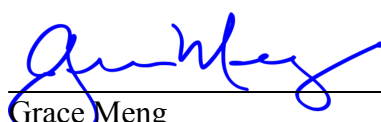

Jasmine Crockett
Co-Chair
Communications Task Force
Democratic Women's Caucus

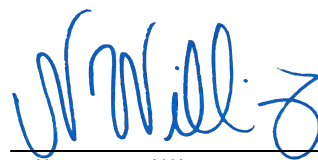

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Member of Congress


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Andrea Salinas
Congressional Hispanic Caucus
Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus


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Lateefah Simon
Co-Chair
Caregiving Task Force
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Shontel M. Brown
Co-Chair
Communications Task Force
Democratic Women's Caucus



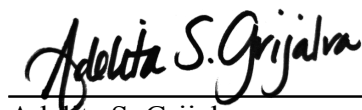
Ro Khanna
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Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



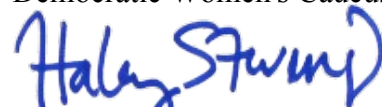
Marcy Kaptur
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Adenita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



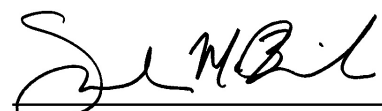
Melanie Stansbury
Co-Chair
Member Services Task Force
Democratic Women's Caucus



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



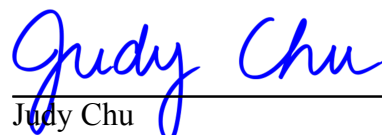
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Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Whip
Democratic Women's Caucus



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Reproductive Healthcare Task
Force Co-Chair & Liaison
Democratic Women's Caucus



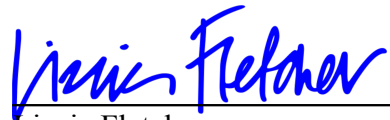
Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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Frederica S. Wilson
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Teresa Leger Fernández
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