



The Union of  
Southwest Airlines Flight Attendants  
**TWU LOCAL 556**

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The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Administrator Stephen Dickson  
Federal Aviation Administration  
AMA-200  
Building 5 Room 206  
P.O. Box 25082  
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

Administrator David Pekosk  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 12th St South  
Arlington, VA 22202

President Joseph R. Biden, Secretary Buttigieg, FAA Administrator Dickson, and TSA Administrator David Pekosk,

As the elected representatives of TWU Local 556, the union of more than 16,000 Southwest Airlines flight attendants, we write to you today with a request for the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Transportation Security Administration to lift the federal mask mandate as soon as is practicable.

In the interest of public safety, we understood the previous need to require those who travel on public transportation to wear masks to help stop the spread of this virus. In support, our members stood as leaders in compliance.

However, the drastic decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases warrants reevaluating the mandate's extension through April 18, 2022. Based on data received from local and national health authorities, many state and local governments, including public schools, are already rescinding their mandates.

Serving onboard during these contentious times and enforcing mask compliance is one of the most difficult jobs we have ever faced as flight attendants. Not since September 11, 2001, has our job environment changed so drastically and quickly. The number of physical and verbal assaults in our workplace has increased dramatically, many of which are related to mask compliance. Through it all, our Members have continued to respond professionally and responsibly with safety and security as our main priority. It is important to note that a large portion of our membership has expressed that they would like the freedom to choose whether to wear a mask at work.

We strongly believe it is now time to give our members and passengers the opportunity to choose if they prefer to wear a mask while flying. In the spirit of bringing normalcy back to our frontlines as aviation's first responders, we ask that you consider lifting the federal mask mandate for airline travel and will move expeditiously to restore choice to aviation professionals and the flying public.

Thank You For Your Consideration,

TWU Local 556 Executive Board

cc:

TWU Local 556 Membership  
TWU International President, John Samuelson  
Southwest Airlines CEO, Bob Jordan