



HOLWELL SHUSTER & GOLDBERG AND ACLU FILE DISCRIMINATION CHARGES AGAINST FRONTIER AIRLINES ON BEHALF OF FEMALE PILOTS

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NEW YORK—Holwell Shuster and Goldberg LLP, along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the ACLU of Colorado, today filed discrimination charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of four female commercial airline pilots at Frontier Airlines who claim that the company’s policies discriminate against women because they fail to provide accommodations related to pregnancy and breast-feeding.

The pilots, who have collectively worked for Frontier for 35 years, assert that despite their dedication to their jobs, the airline’s failure to accommodate their pumping needs made it extremely difficult for them to continue breast-feeding their babies once they returned to work.

The charges assert that Frontier’s policies violate state and federal laws against sex discrimination in employment because they treat pregnancy and breast-feeding less favorably than other medical conditions or disabilities and have a disproportionate effect on women. They also allege violations of the Colorado Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers Act.

According to the charges, Frontier forces pregnant pilots to take eight to 10 weeks of unpaid leave before their due date, allows a maximum of 120 days of maternity leave (all of it unpaid), and fails to make any accommodations to enable pilots who are breast-feeding to pump breast milk when they return to work. Women who are away from their babies need to express breast milk using a breast pump on roughly the same schedule as the baby’s feeding schedule, or serious medical complications can result. But pilots’ schedules often involve long flights and trips that sometimes last days at a time, so they need to have a designated place where they can pump both on the aircraft and at airports.

“Currently, only six percent of commercial pilots are women. Discriminatory policies such as these across the airline industry contribute to this extremely low number,” said Hannah Sholl, counsel at Holwell Shuster & Goldberg LLP. “We hope that Frontier takes the necessary steps to ensure that these discriminatory policies are ended once and for all.”

Prior to filing these charges, Holwell Shuster & Goldberg and the ACLU sent a letter to Frontier requesting that Frontier implement policy changes to adequately accommodate pregnant and breast-feeding pilots. Frontier never responded.

Additional Holwell Shuster & Goldberg attorneys representing the pilots include co-founding partner Michael Shuster, partner Vincent Levy, and associates Jayme Jonat, Lani Perlman, and Ivo Entchev.

The complaint is available here. For additional information, the ACLU's press release and a related video are available here and here.

ATTORNEYS

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