



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Beijing, China

AMBASSADOR

March 27, 2012

Mr. Sidney Kwok
Director, Greater China
United Airlines
C/D1 Unit, 15th Floor, Tower A, Gateway
No. 18 Xiaguangli, North Road, East Third Ring
Chaoyang District, Beijing 100027

Dear Mr. Kwok:

I write to you today on behalf of the United States government employees and their families serving at Embassy Beijing and Consulates General Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Shenyang, and Wuhan who will be transitioning in and out of China this summer as part of their official duties. Our Embassy Travel Section has reported to me that United Airlines has adopted a very restrictive pet shipping policy that will cause significant hardship to our staff. It is my understanding that pets will no longer be able to be transported in the cabin or as checked baggage into and out of China.

As a pet owner myself, I am deeply concerned by this policy change. The sharply increased costs will likely place transporting a family pet beyond the reach of some of our diplomats. The increased cost difference between transporting a small pet in the cabin versus using a commercial cargo service will be over \$700 per pet. In cases of larger pets, employees will now incur new costs between \$1,000 and \$4,000 per animal.

I understand that United Airlines has agreed to grant waivers to the cargo-only rule to members of the U.S. military traveling on official "change of station" orders. That is a distinction that I do not draw among the more than 600 Americans serving directly under my authority in China. Each and every employee serving in China endures hardship and personal sacrifice to support the China-U.S. bilateral relationship and merits the same options enjoyed by their military colleagues. I ask that United China extend this waiver policy to include all U.S. government civilian employees traveling on official change of station orders to and from China.

I have asked my General Service Officer overseeing Embassy travel arrangements, Chris Cortese, to follow up with you. I look forward to a favorable resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary Locke".

Gary Locke