

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 45—Committee on Legislative
Operations and Elections

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Supporting the repeal
of the Wright Amendment.

WHEREAS, In 1967, Southwest Airlines chose Dallas Love Field as the base of operations for its new, low-fare airline which was based on the concept that air travel should be dependable and affordable for everyone; and

WHEREAS, The fledgling company endured years of litigation intended to prevent it from fairly competing with the newly built Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) and the major airlines operating out of that airport; and

WHEREAS, With the passage of the Airline Deregulation Act in 1978 which took the Federal Government out of the business of regulating the routes that an airline could fly, it appeared that open competition would be the determining factor in air routes and air fares; and

WHEREAS, In 1979, with the admitted purpose of protecting DFW and the major airlines which serve it, Congress passed the Wright Amendment which restricts travel into and out of Love Field and prevents a customer from purchasing an airline ticket for travel from Love Field with a destination other than Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma or New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, The Shelby Amendment added Kansas, Alabama and Mississippi to those states in 1997; and

WHEREAS, While the Wright Amendment has an effect on all airlines which operate out of Love Field, Southwest Airlines bears the major impact of the Wright Amendment; and

WHEREAS, A customer traveling from Love Field cannot purchase a ticket from Southwest Airlines for travel beyond any point within the Wright Amendment states, even if that customer is willing to make a stop within one of those states; and

WHEREAS, Southwest Airlines is legally prohibited from offering or advertising the availability of flights between Love Field and any city outside the Wright Amendment service area, preventing it from competing in those markets; and

WHEREAS, Since Southwest Airlines is only allowed to fly short-haul flights from Love Field, which is the type of flight that has declined most significantly since September 11, 2001, the restrictions of the Wright Amendment have limited the growth of the company and the access of the public to competitive, low-cost air travel; and

WHEREAS, Love Field will never rival DFW in the size and scope of its operations because the Love Field Master Plan limits its

growth to 32 gates while DFW has 140 gates and is still growing; and

WHEREAS, DFW is now the world's third busiest airport, serving more than 53 million passengers last year and, because of the lack of competition from airlines such as Southwest Airlines, DFW has one of the highest averages for fares in the country; and

WHEREAS, A phenomenon labeled as "The Southwest Effect" by the United States Department of Transportation has proven that competition from low-cost airlines can lower air fares on all airlines, thereby increasing the number of air travelers and the amount of airport revenues which increases profits in the industry as a whole; and

WHEREAS, While it has been suggested that Southwest Airlines should just move some of its flights to DFW, splitting up its operations would have an economic impact on its company which has been proven to be one of the most profitable in the airline industry, with 32 consecutive years of profitability; and

WHEREAS, Many experts agree that the repeal of the Wright Amendment will have a positive effect on the airline industry by increasing competition, thereby benefiting the public by lowering air fares and giving customers more options; and

WHEREAS, Repeal of the Wright Amendment will benefit the residents of Nevada by expanding options for travel by air and will give tourists and visitors more opportunities to visit our State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE ASSEMBLY CONCURRING, That the members of the 73rd Session of the Nevada Legislature support federal legislation to repeal the Wright Amendment.