



April 8, 2025

Andrew Levy, CEO  
Avelo Airlines  
12 Greenway Plaza, Suite 400  
Houston, TX 77046

Dear Andrew,

Flight Attendants have brought grave concerns to the attention of our union over Avelo's recent decision to contract with the Department of Homeland Security to transport deportees through and out of the country on charter flights under the direction of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Air Operations Unit (ICE charters). According to news reports, this work is scheduled to commence on May 12, a little more than a month from now, and you are currently hiring and accepting transfers to fill positions for flight attendants, pilots and other jobs to support your contract.

AFA strongly objects to unconstitutional, anti-immigrant actions of this Administration in deporting persons without any hearing or other due process. We regret that Avelo has decided to become a party to this despicable activity which will be, in the verdict of history, a dark stain on our Nation's reputation as a champion of human rights and the rule of law. We urge you to reconsider a decision that will be bad for the airline and our country.

Should Avelo proceed with this contract, my foremost concern is for flight attendants being put in situations for which they are neither adequately trained or adequately prepared. Recent coverage reflects how these charters have not accounted for the safety of passengers in the event of emergency, that flight attendants were not trained, and that no engineering had been performed in the aircraft cabin to ensure effective evacuation of restrained passengers.<sup>1</sup>

As the bargaining representative for Avelo flight attendants, we are also gravely concerned about the negative consequences for Avelo's reputation and goodwill, and the impact on the future of the airline.

There is also the risk of legal liability. There were at least six incidents on ICE charter flights requiring evacuations between 2014 and 2019, some of which could have ended in tragedy and significant liability for the carrier.<sup>2</sup> There are also potential civil rights

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<sup>1</sup> "Inside ICE Air: Flight Attendants on Deportation Plans Say Disaster is "Only a Matter of Time," ProPublica, April 1, 2025 (<https://www.propublica.org/article/inside-ice-air-deportation-flights>) (accessed April 7, 2025)).

<sup>2</sup> "A Drunk Mechanic, Shackled Immigrants, a Crash Landing: The Dangers of ICE Flights," Capital & Main, Nov. 4, 2021 (<https://capitalandmain.com/a-drunk-mechanic-shackled-immigrants-a-crash-landing-the-dangers-of-ice-flights>) (accessed April 7, 2025)).

violations. We have already seen the Department of Homeland Security deport one individual it admits was an error but refuses to correct.<sup>3</sup> No one wants to see an incident forever connecting the name Avelo Airlines to the current climate of reckless enforcement of the law and disregard for people's safety and dignity, but that is a real possibility given the company's decision to charter flights for ICE.

We encourage you to review these questions that I hope will assist you in addressing the concerns we've heard and raised with you here. We would appreciate answers communicated by April 12, which will give us one month before these flights are set to commence to evaluate your answers, a reasonable timeline under the circumstances:

- What will be the duties of flight attendants on ICE charter flights?
- What training will flight attendants be provided?
- Are there any special job qualifications for these positions?
- What are the procedures for evacuating shackled or otherwise restrained passengers?
- How will the cabins and emergency exit areas of your aircraft be configured to ensure safe evacuation of shackled or otherwise restrained passengers?
- What rules will apply to interaction and communication with passengers?
- What will be the role of flight attendants if a passenger is in medical distress?
- Will these flights include children? Do applicable rules for children differ from other rules regarding passenger interaction? What if they are unaccompanied by an adult guardian or parent?
- Given that the Administration has taken multiple opportunities to publicize deportation activities, will any flight attendant's images be shown in future government publicity actions? Will the company take measures to ensure the identity and likenesses of flight attendants are not used?

I appreciate your immediate attention to these questions and look forward to your response, as well as available times when we can discuss this decision.

Sincerely,



Sara Nelson  
International President

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<sup>3</sup> "An 'Administrative Error' Sends a Maryland Father to a Salvadoran Prison," The Atlantic, March 31, 2025 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/03/an-administrative-error-sends-a-man-to-a-salvadoran-prison/682254/> (accessed April 7, 2025)).