

Cozen O'Connor Assists Alaska Airlines in \$1.9 Billion Acquisition of Hawaiian Airlines

Wednesday, October 2, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 2, 2024 — Cozen O'Connor advised Alaska Airlines in connection with its recent \$1.9 billion acquisition of Hawaiian Airlines. This acquisition solidifies Alaska as the nation's fifth-largest passenger airline. The combination of the two airlines will reshape the travel industry, enhance competition, and expand guests' access to domestic and international destinations while maintaining Alaska Airlines' and Hawaiian Airlines' distinct brands.

The Cozen O'Connor team served as regulatory counsel and prepared Alaska Airlines' and Hawaiian Airlines' joint applications to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) for approval of the transfer of Hawaiian Airlines' various DOT licenses and authorizations. DOT issued an interim approval relating to that transfer, enabling the parties to close the transaction. In an unprecedented move, DOT required the parties to enter into an agreement involving specific air service, competition and consumer protection-related "commitments" before DOT would grant the interim approval. The Cozen O'Connor team assisted Alaska Airlines to secure that agreement.

The completion of the acquisition was announced on September 18, 2024.

Cozen O'Connor's Washington, DC-based team was led by David Heffernan and included Jonathon Foglia, Rachel Welford, Michael Deutsch, Amanda Losacco, and Charles Zdebski. The team continues to advise Alaska Airlines on DOT, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulatory compliance issues related to the integration of the two airlines' operations.

Kyle Levine, Alaska Airlines' SVP, Legal and General Counsel, stated: "Cozen O'Connor is a longtime trusted partner to Alaska Air Group and David [Heffernan] is a true superstar in the field of aviation regulation. He and the Cozen O'Connor team have been integral to our success over the years, from assisting us in the Virgin America acquisition, to advising on our airline alliances and entry into a global alliance, to navigating the regulatory complexities associated with the COVID pandemic. We were grateful to have David's expertise and equanimity as we worked our way through a challenging regulatory landscape to close the Hawaiian Airlines transaction."

About Cozen O'Connor

Established in 1970, Cozen O'Connor has over 925 attorneys who help clients manage risk and make better business decisions. The firm counsels clients on their most sophisticated legal matters in all areas of the law, including litigation, corporate, and regulatory law. Representing a broad array of leading global corporations and middle market companies, Cozen O'Connor serves its clients' needs through 33 offices across two continents.

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