

ice to airline passengers and a potentially dangerous impairment of the highest possible degree of safety in air transportation. In situations, not infrequent, where passenger survival in an accident or emergency depends upon the competence, ability, and coolness of the flight attendant, nothing is less important than her age, her sexual allure, her measurements—and nothing is more important than her ability to function with calm efficiency when others are unable to do so. The consequences of carrier discrimination, viewed in these terms, could well be tragic.

In summary, we believe that the reasons for outlawing discrimination based upon age with respect to female flight attendants are as compelling as the arguments supporting other civil rights legislation and, in terms of the implications of such conduct upon air safety, even more compelling. Such discrimination is not only offensive to principles supporting the safeguard of individual civil rights; it is also a potentially dangerous trespass upon the obligation owed to airline passengers to provide the highest possible degree of safety in air transportation.

We urge this committee to delete those provisions of section 13 of the pending legislation which would exclude female flight attendants from the scope of its protection, and, as so modified, we urge its prompt enactment by the Congress.

Thank you.

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Miss Cooper.

Since this committee started hearings on this legislation we have tried to gather as much information as we could in all phases of the subject. We find the question relating to airline hostesses is peculiar in nature and the only instance we have run across where such a young age was established for elimination from employment. We have tried to read as much information as we could gather on the logic behind the idea and practice.

We note from your testimony and from testimony that has been presented to the Senate on previous occasions some precedents have been established on the question of the airline hostesses.

Each time you have contract talks with the airlines, does this question of the retirement age of stewardess become a matter of negotiation?

Miss COOPER. We have always felt this was one of our rights and we should not have to negotiate with a company.

Mr. DENT. Isn't it true that Northwest, who had previous restrictions, did remove in their latest contract negotiations such restrictions both on marriage and age by contract with the employees?

Miss COOPER. Yes, sir.

Mr. DENT. I don't know whether they belong to your union.

Miss COOPER. No, they don't; but that is true.

Mr. DENT. On page 10 of your testimony, I notice that of our chief overseas competitors, it appears the only two that have any age restrictions which might give some doubts would be Sabena and Swissair and they limit theirs to age 40. All the others have a reasonable consideration, where they are trying to limit the starting age for hiring practices, which would be close to the age of 20, so that by the time the girls reach 55 they will have kind of a full career. I don't think if a company wants to put in a pre-hiring contract and age like that, I don't think there would be much trouble. I notice some have no restrictions.