

For Immediate Release

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FAA Approves New Child Safety Device Government Gives Parents More Options for Safe Air Travel with Children

WASHINGTON, DC – Air travelers have a new option for securing their children on commercial flights now that the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has approved a new type of child safety device, the AmSafe Aviation CARES.

CARES uses an additional belt and shoulder harness that goes around the seat back and attaches to the passenger lap belt to provide restraint for the upper part of the body. It is designed for children weighing between 22 and 44 pounds. The device provides a smaller and lighter alternative to using forward-facing child safety seats. CARES is not approved for use in motor vehicles.

“We want to provide parents with options so they can make the right decision for their children when they travel by air,” said FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey. “We’re encouraging child seat manufacturers to design new types of devices that meet the FAA’s stringent standards.”

Unlike hard-backed child safety seats that are approved for use in airplanes and motor vehicles, CARES is designed and tested specifically for safe use in airplanes only. Previously, the FAA had allowed only airlines to provide these types of additional child safety devices, but no U.S. airlines presently provide them.

According to the FAA, the safest place for a child on an airplane is in an approved child safety device, not on a parents lap. The agency encourages but does not mandate the use of child safety devices on airplanes because of the increased safety risk to families who, if forced to purchase an extra airline ticket, might choose to drive. The risk to families is significantly greater on the roads than in airplanes, according to FAA and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) statistics.

For additional information go to www.faa.gov/passengers/fly_children.