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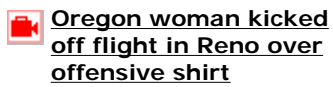
October 5, 2005

RENO

Oregon woman kicked off flight in Reno over offensive shirt

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A Portland woman's flight home was stopped short in Reno, all because the message on the T-shirt she was wearing.

Lorrie Heasley claims it's a freedom of speech privilege, but airline officials say the message brings safety concerns.

Heasley, "There are bigger problems in the country, I can't believe people can be so petty."

Heasley boarded her flight Tuesday morning in Los Angeles, headed for Portland, Oregon with a stopover in Reno. But when Southwest Airlines employees asked her to cover her shirt, her stop over became a stop off her flight.

"I was told that basically that I had to cover my shirt, or I was told if I cover the shirt I can basically stay on the plane."

So she covered the shirt, but during a nap while passengers were boarding in Reno the cover came off. And Southwest employees insisted, change the shirt, or change flights. "I didn't feel that I should have to change my shirt, because we live in the United States, and it's freedom of speech and it was based on the movie "The Fockers", and I didn't think it should have offended anyone."

But it did.

The shirt had pictures of members of the Bush Administration, and a phrase based on the movie "Meet the Fockers," but with one crucial vowel changed.

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It was enough to cause complaints from other passengers and it's a problem the airline has had to deal with before.

Beth Harbin, Southwest Airlines, "We do get it occasionally. What someone is wearing, what someone is reading, what someone might be saying and it's very much a judgment call. But when other customers become concerned we do have to become involved in that and see what we can do to make everyone as comfortable as we can."

And while Southwest may have kept the peace on it's afternoon hop to Portland, a woman, not afraid to use her freedom of speech will now be using her freedom of choice.

"I most likely wont be flying Southwest Airlines again after this."

Southwest Airlines told Heasley she could take a different flight home if she changed her shirt. She refused and opted to rent a car and drive home.

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