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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FARE LODGES FORMAL COMPLAINT AGAINST AMERICAN AIRLINES

Washington, DC – Stein & Vargas today filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation on behalf of Food Allergy Research and Education (“FARE”), charging that American Airlines’ policy of denying individuals with food allergies pre-boarding discriminates on the basis of disability and violates federal law. This second complaint filed by FARE, the nation’s largest organization advocating for the rights of individuals with food allergies, comes just weeks after FARE filed an Informal Complaint seeking investigation of American Airlines’ explicit policy denying pre-boarding to passengers with food allergies.

The Air Carrier Access Act provides that airlines must permit pre-boarding to individuals with disabilities who require additional time to be seated safely. Travelers with food allergies are considered individuals with disabilities within the meaning of federal law and need to pre-board in order to wipe down their seats and tray tables to guard against allergic reactions while in flight. Not only is pre-boarding necessary for the safety of food allergic travelers, pre-boarding costs the airline nothing and prevents delay and inconvenience to other travelers.

“Allowing travelers with food allergies to pre-board so that they can take necessary steps to guard against an allergic reaction while flying is in the best interests of everyone,” said James R. Baker, Jr, MD, CEO of FARE.

FARE is represented by Mary Vargas of Stein & Vargas, LLP who added, “Travelers with food allergies must be permitted to do what is necessary to protect themselves while in flight – this is not only what federal law requires, it is just plain common sense.”

Stein & Vargas, LLP is a civil rights firm based in Washington, D.C. and committed to the principle that all people have full and equal access to all parts of society.

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