

The Final Round¹

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Ridgefield High School

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Resolved: Aviation fuel for all domestic and international flights should be taxed for the purpose of combating global climate change.

A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round at Ridgefield High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. Others may have slightly different versions. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, at points, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight that what a judge hears may not be what they say or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round at Ridgefield was between Pomperaug (Seth Warner and Jenny Lu) on the Affirmative and Pomperaug (Alexndra Madsen and Olivia Lanes) on the Negative. The debate was won by the Affirmative team from Pomperaug.

1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definitions: Aviation fuel, flights, tax
- d) A1²: Global warming is an imminent threat
 - i) Airline flights use lots of fuel
 - ii) High-altitude flights have a disproportionate effect on the ozone layer
 - iii) Airlines produce 3% of the CO₂, rising to 15% by 2050
- e) A2³: A fuel tax will lead to change
 - i) All industries must grow in the beginning

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² "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contentions, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

³ While the Affirmative presented A1 and A2 as two parts of one resolution, they essentially unrelated, and I flowed them as two separate contentions.

- ii) Airlines grew naturally without regulation in the early 20th century
- iii) Now we must regulate the airlines to protect the environment
- iv) For example, there were no taxes on automobiles initially
 - (1) After an initial high rate, they were lowered every year as cars became more energy efficient
- f) A3: Adopting the resolution will prevent an increase in global tension
 - i) Economic discrepancies between countries can lead to economic conflict
 - ii) Economic conflict can lead to political conflict
 - iii) Adopting the resolution puts all countries on the same ground
- 2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative**
 - a) Do taxes keep us out of military conflicts? It's a chain of events, with economic discrepancies eventually leading to conflict
 - b) Is 3% of CO2 significant? Yes
 - c) Can't we regulate air traffic control instead? No, not and get the same benefits.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
 - a) Introduction
 - b) Statement of the resolution
 - c) N1: No real evidence government would use the money to combat global warming
 - i) Tax revenues simply go to the government
 - ii) Resolution doesn't say what the funds will actually be used for
 - (1) Could be used to fund the war in Iraq
 - iii) There is no organization for the money to go to
 - d) N2: The tax will cause economic damage due to increase cost
 - i) The tax will make it cost more to fly
 - ii) \$11 per ticket may not be much, but the impact on cargo will be significant
 - (1) either way consumers will pay
 - iii) One-in-four passengers are business travelers
 - (1) Small businesses would be hurt
 - e) N3: There are more efficient means to combat CO2 and global warming
 - i) Better flight plans and air traffic control
 - (1) Reducing hover time is costless
 - ii) Engines are already becoming more efficient
- 4) Cross-Ex of First Negative**
 - a) Is it easy to increase efficiency? Yes
 - b) Why hasn't it been done? It hasn't been tried
 - c) Engine efficiency is only increasing by 1% per year. Is this enough? It's a helpful factor
 - d) Isn't the goal of a corporation to make a profit? Yes
- 5) Second Affirmative Constructive**
 - a) Introduction
 - b) A1: one flight is the same as 400 cars driving for one year
 - i) Multiply this by thousands of flights
 - ii) Add in the high altitude effect on nitrogen oxides and cirrus clouds
 - c) A2: Taxes will pressure the airlines to improve, not put them out of business
 - i) Money will be used to fund technological innovation

- d) A3: The European Union is considering this tax
 - i) This could cause protests and tension as playing field for airlines would be uneven
 - e) N1: We need additional funding , it's obvious the revenue will be used to combat global warming
 - f) N2: Cost per person is small, only about \$10 per passenger
 - i) This isn't enough to affect business
 - ii) It also isn't enough to affect shipping rates
 - g) N3: Change hasn't happened, so we need to do more
- 6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative**
- a) Is this the only tax that can be used to get money for global warming? No, but it's a good idea.
 - b) If one flight is equivalent to 400 cars for a year, why are they only 3% of emissions? There are a lot of cars, so it's still a big deal
 - c) Do you know where your tax money goes? No
 - d) Does the average American know? No, but this will be a different tax with funds used to combat global warming
 - e) How? It's stated in the packet.
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
- a) Introduction
 - b) N1: No evidence the money will be used well
 - i) The government has misled us on spending before
 - c) N2: The additional cost for cargo will be high, equivalent to \$11 per seat times the number of seats on the plane.
 - d) N3: 3% is not a significant portion of emissions
 - e) N1: How do we know how the funds will be used?
 - f) N2: It will cost a lot more to ship goods
 - i) Business travel is a necessity, and one business may have many workers and require many trips
 - ii) Airlines are already losing billions
 - g) A1: 3% is not significant, and not all of those emissions will be eliminated
 - h) N3: There are more efficient ways to curb emissions, like better routing
- 8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative**
- a) Will the tax be international? Yes
 - b) Are land travel costs rising? Yes
 - c) Can planes be improved? Yes
 - d) Are the costs for cars lower? No
 - e) How do you know this? It's common knowledge
 - f) Are airline CO2 emissions increasing? We don't deny it.
- 9) First Affirmative Rebuttal**
- a) Introduction
 - b) N1: We can assume the tax money will be spent on global warming. The resolution says "should"
 - i) The goal of corporations is to make money
 - ii) The government will care to use the money well
 - iii) This is a big issue, and use of the money will be monitored

- c) N2: Shipping cargo is less expensive than passenger travel
- d) N3: If the changes the negative suggests were easy, they would have been done already
- e) To crystallize the Affirmative position
 - i) Taxing the airlines is a good way to save the environment
 - ii) It's time to regulate the airlines
 - iii) The tax puts all countries on an equal footing

10) First Negative Rebuttal

- a) Introduction
- b) N1: Who would monitor the spending?
 - i) Why would this tax be different from any other
 - ii) Who says the tax will actually happen?
- c) N2: The tax will lead to higher costs
- d) N3: There are more ways to fix the problem
 - i) Airlines want to be efficient
 - ii) What about the other 93% (sic) of emissions?

11) Second Negative Rebuttal

- a) Introduction
- b) A1: Negative believes the resolution won't help global warming
 - i) Airlines are only 3% of CO2 emissions, so the improvement will be less than this
 - ii) There will be no effect on other sources of emissions
 - iii) Global warming is well-funded
 - (1) Only energy conservation works
- c) A2: Affirmative never explains how this will occur
- d) N1: Examining the situation logically, no reason to expect funds to be well-used
- e) N2: The tax will drive up costs
 - i) The airlines are already losing money
- f) N3: 3% is a small amount of emissions, and there are other ways to reduce it
 - i) There is a chance we will destroy the economy and bankrupt the airlines

12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) Introduction
- b) N1: Resolution states the money will go for global warming
 - i) We can form an international organization to handle this
 - ii) They will set aside their own interests
- c) N2: Cargo rates are lower than passenger rates, so no significant impact
 - i) Land travel costs more also
- d) N3: If re-routing flights and improved air traffic control were easy, why haven't they been done?
 - i) These measures aren't enough to solve the problem
 - ii) Engine efficiency only increasing by 1% per year, and that isn't enough
- e) A1: Global warming obviously a threat
 - i) Negative ignores all our arguments but the 3% statistic
- f) A3: Tensions will be eased if all taxed the same