

## **US Air skycaps sue company, claim lost tips**

Airline's \$2 curb fee reduced take, lawyers contend

By Jonathan Saltzman

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Days after a federal jury ordered American Airlines to pay nine skycaps at Logan International Airport a total of more than \$325,000 for lost tips, skycaps for US Airways have filed a similar lawsuit in the same Boston court against their employer.

Lawyers representing at least 3,000 skycaps employed by US Airways and a subcontractor at airports across the country filed a suit in US District Court yesterday challenging the \$2 fee the airline began charging in 2007 for each bag checked at the curb.

The skycaps in the class-action suit contend that the fee has caused their tips to plunge because passengers mistakenly believe skycaps keep the \$2 and are loath to tip on top of it.

"The verdict that we got against American really struck a chord with people," said Boston lawyer Shannon Liss-Riordan, who said the jury's award Monday has emboldened skycaps to challenge such baggage fees. "People have been very happy to see the little guy stand up for himself against a big corporation and say, 'We're not going to be taken advantage of.' "

Andrew Christie, a spokesman for US Airways, which is based in Tempe, Ariz., said the airline had not seen the suit and could not comment.

The suit against US Airways and a subcontractor, PrimeFlight Aviation Services Inc., differs from the claim against American Airlines, said Liss-Riordan, who is working with a Philadelphia firm.

The earlier complaint focused on an alleged violation of a Massachusetts law that protects tips received by service workers who can be legally paid below the state's \$8-an-hour minimum wage.

In the new suit, the skycaps focus on alleged violations of a federal law that protects tips received by workers who earn less than the federal minimum wage of \$5.85 an hour, said Liss-Riordan.