



# Press Release



Empowering Consumers, Nurturing Fairness



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# SCRAP AIRPORT DROP-OFF FEES, STOP DOUBLE TAXATION, SAYS CPB

Westminster, 29 October 2025

The Consumer Protection Bureau (CPB) is calling for an immediate end to unfair airport drop-off fees, branding them a form of double taxation that punishes both drivers and passengers.

- Passengers already pay airport tax on every ticket.
- Drivers already pay road tax, fuel duty, and insurance premiums.
- Adding drop-off charges of £5 – £7 with penalties rising to £100 or more is unjustified and disproportionate.

## Case Study: Chris T. at Heathrow

On 7 August 2025, Chris T. dropped a passenger at Heathrow Terminal 3. Despite following the rules and paying the £6 drop-off fee online the same day, Chris later received a Parking Charge Notice (PCN) from APCOA, the private operator managing Heathrow's drop-off system.

Chris's attempts to challenge the notice were unsuccessful:

- APCOA's helpline was automated, allowing only for payments.
- Emails went unanswered, with deadlines missed.
- His enquiry was eventually "closed" without explanation, while the fine increased.

*"This is not enforcement, it's entrapment," said Yousouf Jhugroo, Managing Director of CPB.*



### Telephone

+44 (0)2035854002



### Email

[info@consumerprotectionbureau.co.uk](mailto:info@consumerprotectionbureau.co.uk)



### Address

83 VICTORIA STREET WESTMINSTER,  
LONDON, SW1H 0HW

## Questionable Legal Foundation

The legal basis of these airport charging schemes is under growing scrutiny:

- **Bristol Airport:** A consumer solicitor argued that £100 “no-stopping” fines may be unenforceable under the Airports Act 1986, which requires breaches of airport byelaws to be prosecuted in magistrates’ courts. In one Guardian Money case, a driver was fined after stopping at a temporary traffic light.
- **Heathrow:** A barrister challenged an APCOA fine, but the operator withdrew before court, avoiding legal scrutiny.
- **Which? Confirmation:** Consumer experts have noted that the legal foundation of these schemes has already been disputed.
- **Relevant Case Law:** In *Vehicle Control Services v HMRC*, tribunals confirmed such charges are contractual, not statutory fines, meaning they must be proportionate, transparent, and legally robust. CPB argues that many current airport schemes fail to meet this standard.

## CPB’s Demands

The Consumer Protection Bureau is urging government and regulators to act without delay by:

- Quashing unfair airport drop-off fees to prevent double taxation of passengers and drivers.
- Ensuring transparency and accountability from private contractors such as APCOA.
- Suspending penalties immediately until the legal foundation of these charges is tested and confirmed in court.

## About the Consumer Protection Bureau (CPB)

The Consumer Protection Bureau (CPB) is a UK Community Interest Company campaigning for fairness, transparency, and accountability in consumer markets. We advocate nationally across transport, financial services, utilities, shoddy goods, substandard services, unfair trading and digital platforms to ensure consumers are treated with respect and justice.

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