

Lawsuit accuses United Airlines of improperly bumping baggage

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A Chicago woman is suing United Airlines, accusing the airline of improperly leaving baggage off flights in favor of cargo.

Plaintiff Gina Spadoni says she paid \$25 to check a bag on a United flight from Chicago to Los Angeles. But when she arrived, her baggage was still in Chicago, waiting to be put on another plane.

Crain's Chicago Business reports Spadoni's lawsuit claims United chose to leave her luggage off the flight because of weight regulations and prioritized more profitable cargo instead.

Per United policy, Spadoni did not receive a baggage fee refund.

Her lead attorney, Tom Zimmerman, told Crain's Chicago Business that in its carriage contract — the terms and conditions passengers agree to when they buy a ticket — United does not say cargo will take priority over passenger luggage.

Zimmerman said United's policy is to carry checked baggage on the same aircraft as the passenger "unless such carriage is deemed impractical." This policy allows United to favor cargo and leave behind passengers' checked baggage, he said.

United issued this statement: "We believe this lawsuit is without merit, and we will vigorously defend against it."

The lawsuit was filed in Cook County Circuit Court. The complaint seeks class-action status.