

Eastern Airlines ordered to rehire transsexual pilot

CHICAGO (AP) — Ruling that transsexuals are protected under the 1964 Civil Rights Act, a federal judge last week ordered Eastern Airlines to rehire a pilot who was discharged after undergoing a sex change operation to become a woman.

U.S. District Court Judge John F. Grady ordered the airline to reinstate Karen F. Ulane, a former Vietnam combat pilot, and give her back pay.

Grady said the airline's contentions that the pilot's presence in the cockpit posed safety hazards were "a pretext and sham of the first order."

Ulane, 42, sued Eastern in 1981 after the airline refused her request to return as a pilot. The woman, formerly Kenneth Ulane, underwent the operation in 1980. He had worked for Eastern for 12 years.