

Spirit terminates Frontier deal, says in talks with JetBlue

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Spirit Airlines terminated a merger with Frontier, saying it is in talks with JetBlue.

After months of back-and-forth, Spirit Airlines announced Wednesday that it was breaking off a merger with Frontier Group, opening the door

to a possible takeover by JetBlue.

The Spirit-Frontier deal, announced in February, was thrown into doubt in early April when JetBlue Airways unveiled its own takeover bid and subsequently launched a hostile takeover bid as smaller carriers try to gain scale to take on the biggest US airlines.

Spirit officials continued to back the Frontier deal, in part due to concerns that the JetBlue offer might face difficulty with antitrust authorities.

But company leaders ran into trouble with Spirit shareholders and repeatedly were forced to postpone an investor vote on the Frontier agreement.

"While we are disappointed that we had to terminate our proposed [merger](#) with Frontier, we are proud of the dedicated work of our team members on the transaction over the past many months," said Ted Christie, chief executive of Spirit in a statement.

"Moving forward, the Spirit Board of Directors will continue our ongoing discussions with JetBlue as we pursue the best path forward for Spirit and our stockholders."

The most recent bid from JetBlue values Spirit at \$3.7 billion, almost a billion more than the value of Frontier.

JetBlue's bid includes a potential \$400 million payment to Spirit if regulators block the [takeover](#).

All three companies have been looking to grow to better compete with the biggest US carriers, American, United, Delta and Southwest.

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