



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS 118TH CONGRESS

May 16, 2023

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen,

On behalf of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), below please find our 2023 FAA Reauthorization priorities. As your committee begins its deliberations on the 2023 FAA Reauthorization Bill, we appreciate your consideration of these important Caucus priorities.

To support our airports, we must increase funding for the Airport Improvement Program to a minimum of \$4 billion annually. This program is essential for airports to meet growing infrastructure needs as the FAA reiterated in its most recent National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems report. Additionally, as we support our airports, we must also invest in technology and resources that combat air pollution in economically disadvantaged communities, which causes devastating health consequences, such as asthma in children.

Historically, economically disadvantaged communities of color are ranked as having the worst air pollution in the United States. For example, in the American Lung Association (ALA) annual State of the Air Report, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties ranked first and second respectively for the worst ozone pollution in the United States. As the Department of Transportation implements the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this Committee plays an important oversight role to ensure the funds reach communities that have faced decades of underinvestment and air pollution.

Also, millions of Americans are subject to aircraft noise, and it is a constant source of consternation whether they live near an airport or under a regular flight path. We must invest in sound insulation programs to reduce aircraft-related noise levels inside homes by installing sound insulated doors and windows. This would offer constituents the ability to protect themselves and their families from aircraft noise, especially if an individual suffers from a condition that is triggered by loud noises.

Passenger and crew safety should be a top priority for the FAA. As you work through the bill, we ask that you include safety standards for protecting against unruly passengers that put staff and other passengers at risk. Additionally, there must be a more transparent and clearer directive for the FAA when dealing with Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS). Safety also involves ensuring the aircraft are accessible to all passengers, which includes requiring the FAA to update regulations on seat sizes.

Furthermore, airlines and the aviation industry have been hit hard by a shortage of pilots and other necessary staff as well as dealing with outdated technology. In the FAA Reauthorization, we must

work to address the aviation labor shortage, or the entire industry will falter. There must be a priority of boosting minority pipelines for qualified pilots, air traffic controllers, mechanics/engineers. If the industry falters, consumers who rely on air travel will see more flight delays, in-flight issues, or cancellations. We must invest in programs, like the aviation maintenance technician development program and the aviation workforce development program, to increase the strength and number of aviation professionals who are well-trained and can be relied upon to make air travel safe and efficient.

The FAA must collaborate with stakeholders to develop a national transition plan to assist airports in moving to fluorine-free firefighting foams. Fluorine is a synthetic-based foam that contains fluorinated and hydrocarbon-based surfactants, including perfluoroalkyl or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Additionally, as we think about our aviation workforce, we must also remember the firefighters that respond to emergencies at our local airports. We must ensure there is funding for the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (ARFF) Truck program.

Additionally, we hope the Committee will consider integrating the following bills into the FAA Reauthorization:

- *Good Jobs for Good Airports Act* (Rep. Jesus Chuy Garcia)
- *American Aviation Diversity Act* (Rep. Adriano Espaillat)
- *The State and Local General Sales Tax Protection Act* (Rep. Grace Napolitano)
- *Supportive Services Expansion Act* (Rep. Pete Aguilar)
- *Safe Skies Act* (Rep. Salud Carbajal)
- *Banning Airport Redevelopment Act* (Rep. Raul Ruiz)
- *The Honest Runway Labeling Act* (Rep. Vicente Gonzalez)
- *The Good Jobs for Good Airports Act* (Rep. Sylvia Garcia)
- *The Accelerating Small Business Growth Act* (Rep. Jimmy Gomez)
- *Good Jobs for Good Airports Act* (Rep. Greg Casar)
- *Communities before Air Tourism Act* (Rep. Robert Menendez, Jr.)
- *Air Traffic Noise and Pollution Expert Consensus Act* (Rep. Raul Grijalva)
- *Essential Air Service eligibility for the Marianas* (Rep. Gregorio-Sablan)
- *Noise Data Collection Act* (Rep. Raul Grijalva)

Thank you for your consideration of these priorities. We look forward to working with your Committee this Congress to advance these priorities forward.

Sincerely,



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