

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At 11:30 a.m. EST today, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA-9) will unveil an FAA reauthorization bill at a press conference on Capitol Hill. NATCA received a copy of the bill and has given its language a complete and very rigorous review. We have looked at every single word and pored over every detail and proposal. We have specifically focused on what protects our members' rights, pay, benefits, and retirement, and what ensures the safety of the National Airspace System (NAS) while also addressing the current problem of providing a stable and predictable funding stream to operate and improve a 24/7 safety function.

After extremely careful review, consideration, and deliberation, we have reached a decision: NATCA supports this bill.

We applaud the very hard work that the Committee has done to think outside the box and come up with a comprehensive bill that addresses the concerns we have shared with them. While the legislation currently addresses NATCA's primary issues of concern, we want to emphasize that today is only the beginning stage of the legislative process.

Part of that process will soon include a proposal by Committee Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-OR-4). The Ranking Member will propose an alternate model for ensuring a stable, predictable funding stream for the FAA, while at the same time protecting employees and ensuring the safety of the NAS. We appreciate the effort he and his staff have made and look forward to giving that proposal's language the same complete and rigorous review.

We want to assure you that we treat this decision with extraordinary care and precision. In reviewing this bill, we found that it is in alignment with all of our organization's policies, practices, and principles. We made sure that we could clearly see how this bill will protect the NAS and allow it to continue to grow.

Last year, we told you – and stated publicly – that any proposed restructuring of the FAA and its funding mechanism through FAA reauthorization legislation must achieve these four things:

1. Safety and efficiency must remain the top priorities;
2. Stable, predictable funding must adequately support air traffic control services, staffing, hiring and training, long-term modernization projects, preventative maintenance, and ongoing modernization to the physical infrastructure;
3. Robust and continued growth of the aviation system is ensured; and
4. A dynamic aviation system that continues to provide services to all segments of the aviation community, from commercial passenger carriers and cargo haulers, to business jets, to general aviation, from the major airports to those in rural America.

We can tell you that this bill achieves each of these four things.

This legislation proposes a federally-chartered, not-for-profit corporation to operate the NAS. We want to be very clear on this point: this is NOT a for-profit model. As we've

said throughout this process, that would be something we would oppose. Many voices in the public discussion of this issue, including the news media, will continue to use the word privatization to describe this bill. But to us, privatization has always meant a profit motive where safety is not the top priority. That definition does NOT fit this bill today. We support this bill because it does make safety the top priority.

It is equally important that any proposed change does not harm our members. After carefully looking at the language, this bill does protect our workforce - including your pay, benefits, retirement, and collective bargaining rights. If this bill, as written today, becomes law, employees will be kept whole.

Finally, we want to reiterate that this bill is just one step in the lawmaking process. As you all know, language in proposed legislation is often changed or amended at various points throughout the legislative process. We will continue to vigorously and carefully review this legislation at all times and push for its improvement. If at any time there are changes to this bill, we will immediately examine them to ensure the bill continues to align with our organization's policies, practices, and principles. We reserve the right to withhold our support if any changes cause the bill to violate our principles.

We will continue to keep you informed on all developments as this process unfolds.

In solidarity,

Paul Rinaldi
President

Trish Gilbert
Executive Vice President