



September 5, 2017

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and  
Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Thune  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen Shuster and Thune and Ranking Members DeFazio and Nelson:

With only a handful of legislative days remaining before the expiration of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) programs and taxes at the end of September, we are writing to urge Congress to quickly pass an FAA extension lengthy enough to ensure that federal funding for airport infrastructure projects across the country will not be held up as Congress continues working on a comprehensive FAA reauthorization bill.

The FAA has long noted that it needs at least six months of funding authorization before it can issue Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants to airports. While a six-month window into the new fiscal year may allow the FAA to issue some AIP grants, that short time-frame is especially troublesome to airports. Airports need a much longer planning horizon as well as reliable and predictable funding in order to repair aging runways and facilities and move forward with infrastructure projects to enhance safety and increase capacity.

In order to avoid the multiple disruptions that airports experienced during consideration of the last FAA bill, we urge Congress to extend aviation programs and excise taxes for at least a year. Passing a longer-term extension bill now would provide airports with much-needed predictability

and ensure they are not subject to the vagaries of frequent, disruptive short-term extensions. In addition, a longer-term extension would not prevent Congress from continuing to work on a full FAA reauthorization proposal.

Airports appreciate efforts during the course of this reauthorization cycle to extend FAA programs and prevent lapses in aviation excise taxes. But repeated short-term extensions and uncertain funding levels can be very disruptive to airports as they try to plan their infrastructure projects. The numerous stop-gap measures during the previous reauthorization cycle caused fits and starts for AIP grants and made it hard on airports trying to plan and complete infrastructure projects, especially smaller airports and those in the northern part of the country that operate with short construction seasons.

Finally, as you continue your deliberations on a long-term FAA reauthorization bill, we again urge you to provide airports with additional funding to address their \$100 billion in infrastructure needs by eliminating the outdated federal cap on local Passenger Facility Charges and by increasing AIP funding. We also urge you to take steps to address the pilot supply issue, remove costly and burdensome FAA regulations of airports, and support programs that help small communities attract and retain commercial air service.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Todd Hauptli  
President and CEO  
American Association of Airport Executives



Kevin M. Burke  
President and CEO  
Airports Council International—North America