



February 8, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Majority Leader, United States Senate  
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Republican Leader, United States House of Representatives  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Republican Leader, United States Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:

As representatives of state aviation agencies in all 50 states, Guam, and Puerto Rico, we thank you for your continued support of the aviation sector. Today, we write to urge you to include no less than \$17 billion in additional Coronavirus relief funds for our nation's airports, especially for non-primary commercial service airports and general aviation airports. **We also ask that your aid to state governments recognize the important role state aviation agencies play in our nation's aviation system, and the impact the current crisis has had on their revenues and operations.**

We appreciate the action Congress took to allocate funds for the aviation sector in the CARES Act and the 2021 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. Further federal support is needed to continue to protect our nation's aviation system. The ongoing decline in aviation activity has continued to lead to a corresponding decrease in revenues for both commercial and general aviation airports, making it difficult to meet increasing operational expenses and debt payments. **Additionally, this significant decline in aviation activity has also impacted state aviation agencies, many of which depend on revenue from state aviation excise taxes for much of their funding.**

**The loss of revenue has caused state aviation agencies to reduce activities, including conduct of onsite airport inspections, deferring planned airport capital projects, cutting back state grants that fund airport maintenance, safety, and security projects, backfilling vacant positions, and eliminating education workforce development grants.** A few state aviation agencies have been able to rely on reserves, but as the current situation continues, they will need to further cut programs and accompanying staff. Additionally, for some states, state transportation funds are segregated, and it is not possible for State Departments of Transportation to use these funds on aviation.

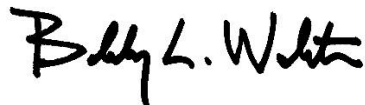
As you consider further Coronavirus relief funding, **please keep in mind the important role of non-primary commercial service airports and general aviation airports to the national aviation system.** These airports support a range of critical aeronautical functions, such as search and rescue efforts, wildfire protection and suppression, lifesaving air ambulance flights, agricultural functions, pilot training, and connecting rural and remote areas to the national aviation system. Of the more than 3,300 airports in the United States eligible for federal airport grants, over 2,900 are non-primary commercial service airports and general aviation airports. With aging airport infrastructure, it is vital that these airports are considered for any additional Coronavirus relief funding.

Lastly, **we urge you to increase the federal share to 100 percent for airport grants through the Airport Improvement Program for Fiscal Year 2021 as part of a Coronavirus relief package.** With the significant decline in state aviation excise taxes and fees, increasing the federal share would provide much needed relief for State aviation

agencies and airports, and ensure the ability of airport sponsors to expend these funds, which will provide jobs as well as improving airport infrastructure.

These actions together will help ensure our nation's aviation system survives this crisis, and prospers as we emerge. Thank you for your consideration, and we continue to stand ready to work with you.

Respectfully,



Bobby L. Walston, PE  
Chair, NASAO Board of Directors  
and Director, Aviation Division  
North Carolina Department of Transportation



Gregory Pecoraro  
NASAO President and CEO

cc:

The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio, Chair, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Sam Graves, Ranking Member, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair, United States Senate, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Roger F. Wicker, Ranking Member, United States Senate, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary, United States Department of Transportation