NASAO OVERVIEW & OUTLOOK
2020–2021

National Association of State Aviation Officials
Dear NASAO Members, Partners, and Friends:

The past year has brought our industry a series of challenges unprecedented in its history. Looking back, the last global pandemic, the “Spanish Flu”, struck in 1918 as the world emerged from World War I. That year, the aviation industry was still in its infancy. The first Atlantic crossing came a year later, and the nation’s first state aviation agency, the Oregon Department of Aviation, wasn’t created until 1921.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role aviation assumed over the past century, playing a major role in our economy, and in our lives. In recent months, even as we traveled less for work or recreation, we demanded that the world’s goods and products be brought to our doorsteps, and aviation obliged. The aviation industry stepped up and found new ways to manage its operations and facilities. Amongst all those who made this possible, state aviation agencies continued their critical role in helping provide a safe and efficient national aviation system. NASAO salutes the men and women of these state agencies who have kept America flying over these challenging months!

As we faced our own challenges in this virtual environment, NASAO has successfully re-established its independence after separating from its association management company, increased its advocacy efforts, and regularly shared timely and informative communications with its members. We hosted our annual convention in September as a virtual event – with the largest attendance in our history joining the first major national aviation association virtual conference held during the pandemic. NASAO’s committees have been revitalized, and more states are participating than ever before, helping us enlarge our ability to inform and influence policymaking in aviation.

We are proud to say that we have never missed a beat in serving our members and fulfilling our principal mission - advancing the public interest in aviation.

The following pages will provide an overview of NASAO today, and we hope you will find it informative. But we want you to know that NASAO is looking to the future. Aviation technologies are progressing at a terrific rate, making aviation cleaner, quieter, and more accessible than ever. These developments will provide the states and NASAO with tremendous opportunity to engage with partners throughout the industry to ensure that these advances serve the needs of the American people and their economy. Coupled with a much-anticipated federal investment in infrastructure, aviation can be expected to continue its increasingly central role in our lives.

The post pandemic future is full of opportunity for the aviation industry to continue its remarkable contribution to our lives, and state aviation agencies and NASAO have a central role to play in this exciting future. We look forward to continuing our work with all of you to make it possible!

Sincerely,

Bobby L. Walston, P.E.
NASAO Chair

Gregory Pecoraro
NASAO President and CEO

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Our Vision:
To be the nationally recognized voice for the public interest, states and territories on aviation and the national aviation system.

Our Mission:
To encourage and foster cooperation and mutual aid among the states and territories, the federal government and public sector in the development and promotion of aviation systems that can safely and effectively serve the needs of citizens, commerce and communities throughout the United States.

NASAO — WHAT WE DO

NASAO Committees
- Airport Planning, Development & Operations Committee
- Block Grant Committee
- Communications Committee
- Finance Committee
- Legislative Affairs Committee
- NASAO/AASHTO Standing Committee on Aviation
- Nominations Committee
- Emerging Aeronautics & Airspace Committee

The NASAO Training Program offers more than 30 Courses in 7 Modules
- Being Aware of the Airport Environment
- Appreciating Key Partners
- Aviation Planning 101
- Environmental Planning 101
- Engineering 101
- Essentials of Project Funding
- People Skills

NASAO advocates for the successful influence of federal and state aviation policy
- Increases NASAO visibility on the Hill
- Drafts legislative language to implement key reauthorizations priorities
- Enhances efforts to involve NASAO in key legislative initiatives and issues
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NASAO MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

10 Reasons NASAO Membership is Important to You, Your Agency and Your Customers

1. INFLUENCE
Since 1931, NASAO has been the recognized and respected voice of state government aviation agencies in Washington, D.C. NASAO’s membership is strictly limited to the states, U.S. Territories and Commonwealths. NASAO is a consensus driven association of aviation professionals who serve the public interest and is a trusted source of accurate information. NASAO regularly briefs administration officials, members of Congress, organizations such as the National Governors Association and federal agency heads.

2. MEMBER ASSISTANCE
The experienced and knowledgeable NASAO staff, which prides itself on excellent service to members, is only a phone call or an email away. Additionally, assistance from experienced peers across the country is also available to members.

3. FUNDING
NASAO played a key role in coalitions that helped pass three of the most important infrastructure investment bills in U.S. aviation history, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, AIR-21, and VISION-100. NASAO will continue to work with Congress and the FAA to ensure adequate Airport Improvement Program funding, continuation of the State Block Grant Program (now available to an additional 10 states), appropriate General Aviation airport investments, and beneficial state apportionment levels.

4. ACCESS
Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, U.S. DOT Secretaries, FAA Administrators, NTSB Chairmen, TSA Administrators, and other senior Administration officials have all been speakers at NASAO events and are accessible to NASAO members. NASAO staff regularly briefs the Administration, U.S. DOT, FAA, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Treasury, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, the Office of Management and Budget and the Governmental Accountability Office and Congressional staff on issues important to the states.

5. SECURITY
Even before DHS or TSA were established, NASAO had an Aviation Security Committee which made recommendations to the federal government in the wake of 9/11. NASAO was the co-author of TSA’s Guidelines for general aviation airports. In concert with the aviation community, NASAO has successfully campaigned for effective common-sense security regulations while rejecting those which would be ineffective. The NASAO staff has met with former DHS Secretaries and TSA Administrators and has an excellent working relationship with the TSA aviation staff.

6. ADVOCACY
While there are many associations in Washington, D.C. for the various facets of the large and diverse aviation community, only NASAO speaks for the states, protecting and promoting aviation in the public interest. When necessary, NASAO effectively opposes unnecessary or inefficient regulation or rulemaking.

7. RESEARCH
NASAO was an important advocate for the establishment of an Airport Cooperative Research Program. Today, NASAO’s President is an ex officio member of the oversight board of the ACRP, which conducts important research and has been federally funded at $15 million annually. These efforts are essential to a safe, healthy and productive national airport system.

8. COMMUNICATIONS
All NASAO members receive the weekly members-only electronic newsletter, NASAO Briefs which provides an update on happenings in Washington, D.C., a review of recent NASAO activities, a look at what other aviation associations are doing, and a round-up of state aviation issues and actions. All NASAO/FAA regions have jointly participated in monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly or semi-annual telecons since 1966. Each year, the NASAO staff produces the association’s annual convention and trade show, the annual Washington, D.C. Legislative Conference and an EAA AirVenture Oshkosh meeting. Each of these events is designed to keep members informed about the latest policies, programs, legislation, rulemaking, products and services affecting all states. NASAO also offers unparalleled networking opportunities between and among members to share insights, solve problems and discuss issues.

9. PARTNERSHIP
At the federal level, NASAO maintains a close working relationship with all of the primary agencies engaged with aviation regulation and has an extensive history of productive Memoranda of Understanding with the FAA. Whether official or informal, NASAO focuses on strong relationship building with those involved in regulation and legislation. Within the aviation community, NASAO regularly works with all of the major national aviation shareholders, as well as dozens of other regional and state aviation advocates, large and small, across the nation.

10. EDUCATION
After years of development, the non-profit NASAO Center for Aviation Research and Education is proud to provide an introductory training program to state aviation employees across the country. We have designed an educational program to allow employees to gain a basic understanding of the aviation industry as well as to provide an orientation to the complex world of airports. The NASAO program offers more than 30 courses in the following modules: Being Aware of the Airport Environment, Appreciating Key Partners, Aviation Planning 101, Environmental Planning 101, Engineering 101, Essentials of Project Funding and 1-800 Citizen Hotline.
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WE ARE EXCITED TO PARTNER WITH NASAO AND THEIR AVIATION TRAINING PROGRAM. WITH A VARIETY OF INTRODUCTORY COURSES ONLINE NOW, WE LOOK FORWARD TO EXPANDING THE COURSE CONTENT THIS SPRING WITH ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM FOCUSED ON AIRPORT FUNDING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR RELEASE DATE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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NASAO — LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2021

COVID-19 RELIEF EFFORTS
NASAO appreciated the action Congress took early in the pandemic and subsequent economic crisis in appropriating significant funds to help support the aviation sector. More needs to be done, and NASAO encourages Congress and the Administration to provide additional funds to support the nation’s airlines, airports, and aviation-related businesses which include:

- Aid to the states to support state aviation agencies, which have been hard hit by the significant decline in state aviation excise taxes and fees caused by the decline in aviation activity, is a top priority for NASAO. Without federal support, many state aviation programs are at risk of not fulfilling their important role in the safety and efficiency of the National Aviation System.
- Protecting the solvency of the Federal Airport & Airways Trust Fund (AATF) is critical. When Congress declared a federal excise tax holiday for commercial aviation, funds flowing into the AATF declined. Congress must ensure that the AATF is made whole, and able to fund the nation’s aviation infrastructure needs into the future. NASAO opposes efforts to extend the federal aviation excise tax holiday.

AVIATION FUNDING & REFORM
NASAO urges support for robust aviation funding and reforms not addressed in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-254).

- Support protecting FAA from future Federal Government shutdowns
- Support increasing Airport Improvement Program (AIP) investment by $250 million to $3.6 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 and incrementally increasing that amount to $4 billion over the course of five years
- Support reforming the Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) Program to account for reduction in State Apportionment formula funding
- Support raising and indexing the $4.50 Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) Cap
- Support alternative and environmentally conscious methods of compliance with the Aqueous Film Forming Foam (AFFF) testing requirements at Part 139 airports
- Support increased investments for aviation workforce development initiatives, including more avenues for pilots to gain credit toward Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) certification

AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AIP) FEDERAL MATCH
NASAO supports increasing the federal share of AIP funds to 100 percent for FY 2022. With the significant decline in state and local aviation excise taxes and fees due to the pandemic, many state aviation agencies and local airport sponsors may struggle to provide the traditional 10 percent non-federal share of AIP projects.

STREAMLINING GRANT FUNDING TRANSFERS
NASAO urges Congress to allow airport sponsors to transfer unused Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) funds to state aviation agencies and make them available to National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) airports within their state. Allowing non-State Block Grant Program States to transfer NPE funds within their state would ensure the funds are made available for AIP eligible projects within their state before the funds expire. NASAO proposes Congress expand the definition of “airport sponsor” to include state aviation agencies/aeronautics offices that do not own airports.

UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (UAS)
NASAO urges Congress to outline a constructive federal, state, and local regulatory framework for drone integration strategies that support the collaborative application of a low-altitude drone activity policy between federal and state agencies.

CRITICAL PROGRAMS
NASAO maintains support for fully funding the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program, the Small Community Air Service Program (SCASP), the Federal Contract Tower (FCT) Program, and NextGen. Several long-overdue reforms to these programs were included in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-254), and NASAO looks forward to their successful implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM EXPANSION
The FAA Reauthorization of 2018 (P.L. 115-254) increased the number of states eligible to participate in the State Block Grant Program from 10 states to 20. Additional states have expressed interest in applying, and NASAO aims to work closely with the FAA to inform and prepare those states throughout the entire process.

NASAO urges Congress to authorize the FAA to allow states to use their apportioned AIP funds to administer the State Block Grant Program. Since the inception of the program, the FAA has increased the states’ responsibilities to administer the program. Similar U.S. Department of Transportation modal programs receive reimbursements for documented eligible administrative costs. Making this change would help current and future participants in the State Block Grant Program manage the increased workload of administering the program, as well as provide an incentive for other states to consider joining the program.

SUPPLEMENTAL DISCRETIONARY GRANTS
The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-254) authorized discretionary airport infrastructure grants for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), starting at $1.02 billion in FY 2019 and increasing each year to $1.11 billion in FY 2023. The law also stipulated that at least 50 percent of funds were required to be used for non-hub and small hub airports, as well as general aviation airports. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260) provided $400 million in discretionary airport infrastructure grants to remain available through September 30, 2023. No parameters were provided for the distribution of these funds.

NASAO supports Congress appropriating the full amounts authorized in P.L. 115-254 and believes Congressional intent should be closely adhered to by the FAA when administering these supplemental grants. NASAO further supports prioritizing safety critical projects at general aviation airports.
NBAA’s Regional Representatives

A Voice, Resource, and Network for Business Aviation

NBAA’s group of highly qualified, experienced regional representatives work with community leaders, NBAA members, and the larger business aviation industry throughout the year on a range of state and local issues. For more information about NBAA’s regional resources, contact the regional representative nearest you, or visit www.nbaa.org/regional. To learn more about why business aviation is important to your state, visit No Plane No Gain at www.noplanenogain.org.

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