

February 10, 2016

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
House of Representatives
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank LoBiondo
Chairman
Aviation Subcommittee
House of Representatives
2251 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Aviation Subcommittee
House of Representatives
2251 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Shuster and LoBiondo and Ranking Members DeFazio and Larsen:

We write today in strong support of efforts to modernize our nation's aviation industry through reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). We believe that market forces—not the federal government—should be what drives a 21st century aviation policy in this country.

We strongly support the efforts of Chairman Shuster to corporatize air traffic control, to rely more heavily on user fees—instead of federal dollars—and to pass a truly transformational FAA reauthorization bill.

To be truly transformational, however, Congress must not only remove the federal yoke from air traffic control, but should do the same when it comes to how airports are financed. We need to move to a system where airports are fully self-sufficient, instead of reliant on federal tax dollars. We need a system that will allow decisions to be made at the local level and a system where the users of airports bear the responsibility of paying for that use—not taxpayers. In order to do so, the Congress should remove the federally imposed cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC).

The responsibility for financing infrastructure needs at airports should be borne by the airports and the travelers who use and directly benefit from those facilities. By removing the federally imposed cap on the PFC, airports can become self-sufficient and break their addiction to federal taxpayer dollars.

America's airports are powerful economic engines, generating more than \$1.1 trillion in annual activity and supporting more than 9.6 million jobs. However, airports require approximately \$15.14 billion annually in infrastructure improvements to update aging facilities, relieve delays and congestion, promote safety and security, enhance the passenger experience, as well as spur airline competition to provide consumers with more choices and affordable options. Washington

should get out of the way and allow airports to set a PFC that is in line with their local needs and one that reflects market realities.

Our neighbors to the north in Canada have been at the forefront of efforts to modernize the aviation industry. Not only have they successfully corporatized air traffic control, they have also given their airports the ability to fend for themselves and become financially self-sufficient. We believe strongly that we should follow suit and get Washington out of all aspects of the aviation industry.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

Greg Conko
Executive Director
Competitive Enterprise Institute

Tom Schatz
President
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste

Andrew Langer
President
Institute for Liberty

Chuck Muth
President
Citizen Outreach

Julie Gunlock
Director and Senior Fellow
Independent Women's Forum