

October 3, 2023

25 Massachusetts Ave NW, Suite 500
Washington D.C., 20001
(202) 789.7850 main ■ www.ASCE.org

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ted Cruz
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz:

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) would like to thank you for your leadership in scheduling a nomination hearing to consider Michael Whitaker to serve as administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). ASCE urges the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to expeditiously move forward with the confirmation process so the FAA has a permanent leader in place.

Whitaker's decades-long career in the aviation industry includes various private and public sector positions. His current role as chief operating officer of the Advanced Air Mobility provider Supernal and his former service as deputy administrator and chief NextGen officer at the FAA allow him to bring a unique perspective of the agency and familiarity with the technological innovations associated with the future of aviation.

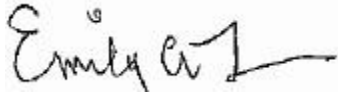
Strong leadership at the FAA is always important, but it will be particularly necessary as the agency navigates a number of pressing issues, such as continued Congressional deliberation over legislation to reauthorize FAA programs, recent safety incidents and runway incursions, staffing challenges, and implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). ASCE strongly supports a multi-year FAA reauthorization bill that provides robust and reliable funding for the planning and execution of much-needed projects to improve aviation infrastructure. While Congress recently averted a government shutdown and extended the FAA's authorization until the end of the year, having a permanent FAA administrator in place will be crucial to championing a multi-year reauthorization bill and helping to avoid a series of disruptive short-term extensions.

Infrastructure plays a vital role in ensuring planes travel safely, airports withstand seismic incidents and weather-related disasters with resilience, and terminals process passengers efficiently. On ASCE's 2021

Report Card for America's Infrastructure, aviation earned a D+. With Whitaker at the helm of the FAA, ASCE believes the agency can help achieve a higher infrastructure Report Card grade.

The FAA has been without a Senate-confirmed leader for more than a year and a half. The confirmation of a permanent leader at the FAA will provide stability and guidance as the agency addresses numerous important challenges. We urge the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to approve Whitaker's nomination in a timely manner. Thank you for allowing us to voice our support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Feenstra". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Emily Feenstra
Chief Policy and External Affairs Officer
American Society of Civil Engineers