

February 7, 2024

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair
The Honorable Ted Cruz, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate
254 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515



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Dear Chair Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz,

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) commends you for your continued work on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2023 and for scheduling a markup session on this important legislation. We urge you to pass this bill out of committee in a timely manner so the Senate can consider and approve it.

ASCE considers passage of a multi-year FAA reauthorization bill a top legislative priority. As the professionals responsible for designing and operating the country's built environment, civil engineers recognize the importance of safe and reliably funded aviation infrastructure. Our aviation system allows people to travel to their destinations, facilitates the movement of goods, and plays a key role in the nation's economy. Unfortunately, ASCE'S 2021 *Report Card for America's Infrastructure* graded the nation's aviation infrastructure a "D+".

Since its introduction, ASCE has supported the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023, which offers reliable support for programs that are vital for the safety, growth, and resilience of our system. In particular, ASCE appreciates the strong support given to the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), which is a major source of infrastructure investment funding for airports. The \$20 billion included for AIP grants will help airports meet growing infrastructure needs.

We would also like to commend the bill's emphasis on improving safety, particularly in light of the near misses and other incidents that have taken place over the last year and a half. Notable proposals include a study with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics on monitoring ground source data, a pilot program focused on air traffic flow management technology, and a study of runway safety incidents to identify technologies that may prevent or reduce the risk of such incidents. Safety is the watchword of the civil engineering profession, and we appreciate the provisions that aim to make air travel safer for passengers and system operators.

Across all sectors of infrastructure, ASCE supports sustainability and resilience, and we appreciate the bill's inclusion of these subjects. We are especially grateful for the provision in the bill that charges the FAA administrator to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to identify best practices for improving the resiliency of airports in coastal or flood-prone areas.

Again, we would like to reiterate our support for the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023 and ask the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation to approve this bill. Advancing this bill out of committee is a key step toward its consideration by the full chamber and bipartisan negotiations with the House of Representatives. ASCE strongly urges Congress to approve a bipartisan, multi-year FAA reauthorization bill before the current short-term extension expires March 8. Short-term

authorizations and lapses in authorization are disruptive for those who use and operate transportation systems. A prompt, multi-year reauthorization would prevent uncertainty with future projects and FAA programming.

We recognize and appreciate the committee's dedication to bipartisanship in working on this legislation. ASCE stands ready to assist you as you continue to work with your colleagues on this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Caroline Sevier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Caroline Sevier

Managing Director, Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives