



Washington Airport Management Association

Supporting Washington's airports since 1970

Thursday, July 30, 2020

The Honorable Patty Murray
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
511 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: FUNDING SUPPORT AND DISTRIBUTION OF HEALTH, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, LIABILITY PROTECTION AND SCHOOLS (HEALS) ACT TO AIRPORTS WITHIN THE NATIONAL PLAN OF INTEGRATED AIRPORTS SYSTEM

Dear Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell:

Washington Airport Management Association (WAMA) is grateful Congress provided funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which helped airports throughout the nation weather the immediate storm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The depth of the challenges is unprecedented and further helped airports it needed to meet ongoing airport operating requirements, meet bond payments, keep construction projects on track, and address other challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. As you contemplate during the upcoming weeks the possibility of an additional coronavirus relief package, we urge your strong consideration of much needed additional relief for airports. We certainly understand the many requests you are receiving from all sectors of the economy, but we believe airports are unique. Airports are a vital component to the economic recovery and require additional federal funding to sustain viability. In Washington there are 10 commercial service airports and over 120 General Aviation Airports located throughout the state in large and small communities. Much of our General Aviation Airports provide crucial support to their local communities, aerial firefighting, air ambulance and emergency healthcare, and aircraft manufacturing. Provided the diverse aviation presence within Washington state, our airports produce 407,042 jobs and infuse approximately \$107 billion into the economy, which will be a critical factor during the economy's recovery. Please consider the following as a possible funding package is developed.

\$10 billion dedicated funding allocated to the Airport Improvement Program: These funds will help future needs of airports across the country in the face of significantly reduced revenues due to COVID-19. Airports would use these resources to fund operations, payroll obligations, debt service requirements, existing construction projects, and recovery efforts. We support the continuation of flexibility provided to airports in the CARES Act allowing airports to use additional resources for "any purpose for which airport revenues may lawfully be used."

Executive Officers, Board Members and Executive Director

Adam Phelps, President; Rich Mueller, Vice President; Lorene Robinson, Secretary; Sara Young, Treasurer
Tim Mensonides, Past President; Brandon Rakes, Jennifer Skoglund, Rob Hodgman, and Rob Peterson, Board Members;
David Field, Associate Member
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Marjy Leggett, Executive Director
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General Aviation Airports: \$500 million for General Aviation Airports, which are largely supported by aviation system activity such as fuel sales and have witnessed a drastic decline in revenues. While the CARES Act provided \$100 million to general aviation airports, those resources were relatively modest considering that there are nearly 3,000 eligible General Aviation Airports that carry similar financial burdens as commercial service airports. These resources would help critical General Aviation Airports meet ongoing operational expenses, debt service requirements and payroll of their employees.

Increased Federal Share for Airports: \$500 million for FY2021 Department of Transportation (Federal Aviation Administration Appropriations Bill. Consistent with provisions in the CARES Act as it relates to FY20 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants, American Association of Airport Executives proposes to increase AIP funding so the federal share for all AIP grants issued in FY21 is 100 percent. This would free scarce local resources for other necessary purposes, including operational expenses.

Once again, we appreciate your leadership and partnership through this very difficult and challenging period. If you should have any questions please contact Adam Phelps, President at aphelps@spokaneairports.net or 509-455-6425.

Sincerely,

Adam Phelps
President
Washington Airport Management Association

CC: Raquel Crowley, Central Washington Outreach Director, Office of Patty Murray
Zach Mallove, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Patty Murray
Rosemary Gutierrez, Legislative Director, Office of Maria Cantwell
David Fleckenstein, Director of Aviation, Washington State Department of Transportation
John Dobson, President, Washington State Aviation Alliance
File

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