



July 22, 2011

Dear Ranking Member Costello:

On behalf of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) and Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS), which together represent over 30,000 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees, we are writing to urge you to immediately pass a clean extension of funding and expenditure authority for the FAA. The current approach assures that vital FAA programs will shut down and thousands of FAA employees will be furloughed. Instead, we urge Congress to pass a clean extension and continue working to complete a multiyear reauthorization.

An extension of the FAA's authority is the only way to ensure continued operations and prevent delays in FAA modernization projects and initiatives. Failure to pass an extension will put at risk vital FAA safety programs, prevent the FAA from moving forward on critical airport projects and improvements, and stop work on major initiatives related to the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). Furthermore, without an extension, approximately 4,000 FAA employees will be furloughed. These employees provide essential services and perform a variety of functions critical to the safe and efficient operation of the aviation system, including, among others, airport safety planning, NextGen research and testing, airport safety and engineering standards, and administering airport construction project grants. In order to ensure that these employees are able to continue to provide such important services, an FAA extension is imperative.

On behalf of thousands of FAA employees, we are asking you to secure swift passage of an FAA extension to ensure that all FAA employees are still working after midnight tonight. Without such an extension, the safety and efficiency of this country's aviation system, and the safety of the millions of Americans who use that system every day, will be put at risk.

Sincerely,

Gerald W. McEntee
AFSCME President

Paul Rinaldi
NATCA President

Tom Brantley
PASS President