

April 22, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2268 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank LoBiondo
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2427 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster, Ranking Member DeFazio, Chairman LoBiondo and Ranking Member Larsen:

On behalf of the thousands of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees represented by our organizations, we are writing to express our viewpoint regarding recent discussions related to reform of the FAA, specifically the opinions brought forth at the March 24, 2015, House Aviation Subcommittee hearing titled "Options for FAA Air Traffic Control Reform."

As representatives of FAA employees, we firmly believe that the most significant issue currently facing the agency is the lack of a stable and secure funding stream. The National Airspace System (NAS), which FAA employees design, install, operate and maintain, safely flies two million passengers to and from their destinations on 87,000 flights per day, with the commercial aviation industry contributing more than \$1.3 trillion to the U.S. economy each year in addition to providing over 10 million jobs. It is imperative that such a major aspect of this country's economy be adequately and consistently funded.

There is no debate that sequestration, operating under multiple continuing resolutions and the recent government shutdown resulted in negative impacts that resonated nationwide. These included open watches, increased restoration times, delays in getting needed parts and equipment, modernization delays, missed or deferred preventative maintenance, reduced redundancy, and agency hiring freezes and furloughs. According to an estimate from Standard & Poor's, the government shutdown cost the economy \$24 billion, including about \$3.1 billion in lost government services. The FAA is just now recovering from the impacts of the 2013 sequestration. This is a situation that should not be repeated.

However, we do not agree that a massive change to the FAA's structure is the solution to the funding problem. Instead, we urge lawmakers to develop a plan that addresses the FAA's need for stable funding free of the threat of sequestration. In addition, we do not believe that the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) should be separated from the other lines of business within the FAA because the ATO is inextricably intertwined with the agency's other functional divisions. For example, communication and sharing of information and resources within the agency, including between the ATO and the Office of Aviation Safety (AVS), is essential to allow the agency to seamlessly perform work necessary to ensure safety every step of the way. The FAA must remain one cohesive unit in order to allow all FAA employees to continue working together for the benefit of the world's foremost aviation system.

While we recognize that FAA funding must be addressed and that this may involve some restructuring, we are opposed to privatization of any of the functions or services within the FAA, including the ATO, either through a for-profit or not-for-profit company. As representatives of the employees who ensure the safety and efficiency of the world's largest aviation system, we ask for your support in ensuring that all FAA employees remain employees of the federal government. The work performed by the highly skilled and dedicated employees at the FAA is no doubt a function intimately related to the public interest. We stand ready to participate in future conversations related to FAA reform in order to allow these federal employees to continue doing the work they do every day to keep this country's aviation system safe.

Sincerely,



J. David Cox Sr.
National President
American Federation of Government Employees
(AFGE)



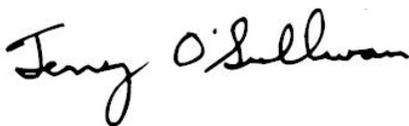
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Lee Saunders
President
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Conley Wicker
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