

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 7, 2017

The Honorable Keith Hall
Director
Congressional Budget Office
402 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Director Hall:

Last month, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its cost estimate for H.R. 2997, the “21st Century AIRR Act”, as ordered reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. CBO determined that H.R. 2997, which privatizes the Nation’s air traffic control system, would increase net deficits by more than **\$20 billion** over the next 10 years and by more than **\$5 billion** in subsequent 10-year periods.

Subsequent to CBO’s cost estimate, the Committee on Rules posted a different version of H.R. 2997 (Rules Committee Print 115-25) for consideration on the House Floor. Rules Committee Print 115-25 includes **significant changes** to the version of the bill that CBO previously reviewed. For instance, compared to the reported bill, Rules Committee Print 115-25:

- cuts \$1 billion of contract authority funding for airport construction grants under the Airport Improvement Program;
- authorizes \$945 million from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund for research and development activities of the Federal Aviation Administration;
- slashes revenues from aviation excise taxes by more than **\$15 billion per year** (on average) from current levels beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2021; and
- includes no budgetary offsets.

In total, these changes to H.R. 2997, reflected in Rules Committee Print 115-25, likely add tens of billions of dollars to the cost of the legislation and, thus, the budget deficit. These changes were executed without any opportunity for us, as Ranking Members of the Committees of jurisdiction, to provide input or to debate the wisdom of the changes. Moreover, given that none of these changes were considered in the Committees of jurisdiction, CBO has not provided any cost estimate of their effects.

Therefore, to better inform Members of Congress of the significant changes included in H.R. 2997 prior to Floor consideration, we request that CBO issue a full cost estimate of Rules Committee Print 115-25 by September 5, 2017.

The Honorable Keith Hall
August 7, 2017
Page 2

If you have any questions, please contact Ward McCarragher, Democratic Chief Counsel, of the Committee on Transportation on Infrastructure (ext. 54472).

Thank you for your consideration.


Sincerely,



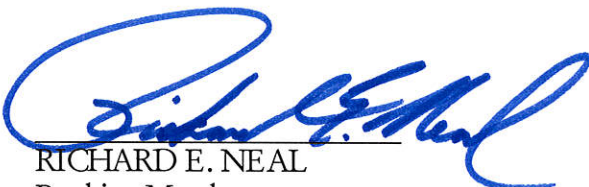
PETER DeFAZIO
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure



JOHN A. YARMUTH
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget



EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space, and
Technology



RICHARD E. NEAL
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means

cc: The Honorable Pete Sessions, Chairman Committee on Rules
The Honorable Louise McIntosh Slaughter, Ranking Member, Committee on Rules
The Honorable Bill Shuster, Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
The Honorable Diane Black, Chairman, Committee on the Budget
The Honorable Lamar Smith, Chairman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
The Honorable Kevin Brady, Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means