



September 10, 2013

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leaders Reid, McConnell and Pelosi:

We understand that Congress faces significant funding challenges as the federal government moves towards the beginning of Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) on October 1. America's airports have significant concerns about the prospect of a return of employee furloughs, facility closings and other potential action at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that could impact air traffic and our nation's aviation system. As you know, Congress approved the diversion of \$250 million in Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding to mitigate the impact of sequestration on the FAA earlier this year for the remainder of FY13. Airports should not be asked again to sacrifice critical construction projects to resolve funding issues.

With fiscal year 2014 now in clear view, we understand that AIP grants are again being viewed by some as a possible source of funding to address potential FAA budget shortfalls. While airports are eager to avoid FAA furloughs as well as other potential actions from FAA that could disrupt the nation's aviation system, and while we are generally supportive of granting FAA the flexibility to move funds to manage the impact of budget cuts mandated by sequestration, AIP funds should remain protected as mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011.

The use of AIP to fund FAA operations is a misguided approach that disregards the fact that passengers are paying a portion of their airline ticket taxes for airport capital improvements, in particular the safety and capacity projects necessary to keep U.S. airports' infrastructure reliable and competitive with the rest of the world. These funds ensure airports can make essential, long-term investments in maintaining and upgrading facilities. Using the funding that passengers pay for airport improvements to again address FAA's sequestration problem is not in the long term interests of the U.S. aviation system.

Furthermore, the Senate Appropriations Committee recognized the impact that the transfer of AIP funds to end the FAA furloughs in April has had on our nation's airports. The report

accompanying the Senate FY14 Transportation Appropriations bill states that, "The Committee views this use of limited airport resources in fiscal year 2013 as a one-time occurrence aimed at averting serious national impacts." The report further notes that "The use of AIP funds for purposes other than airport infrastructure development could have a serious impact on the ability of the Nation's airports to meet current and future FAA standards; replace or rehabilitate critical airport facilities; increase airfield capacity; enhance competition among airlines; modify, replace, or construct facilities to accommodate additional passengers and aircraft; or meet other important safety, security, and environmental requirements."

As Congress considers funding options for the upcoming fiscal year, airports remain opposed to any efforts to use airport infrastructure funding (AIP) to pay for FAA operations and to mitigate potential FAA employee furloughs. We stand prepared to work with the FAA and Congress to identify solutions and areas of potential flexibility, however, America's airports strongly urge you to protect critical AIP funding, as called for in the Budget Control Act.

Finally, we would note that continued uncertainty with the federal budget process illustrates vividly the need to give airports the self-help they need to meet future infrastructure development needs through an increase in the federal cap on local passenger facility charges (PFCs). We renew our call for Congressional action.

Sincerely,



Deborah McElroy  
Interim President  
ACI-NA



Todd Hauptli  
President, AAAE Gov