



Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart

*Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations*

**FY 2017 Budget Hearing: Federal Aviation Administration
March 2, 2016
Opening Statement As Prepared**

The Subcommittee will come to order.

Today we welcome Administrator Michael Huerta from the Federal Aviation Administration to discuss the Fiscal Year 2017 budget request. Administrator Huerta, we appreciate your flexibility today. We originally had you scheduled as part of a panel with the Federal Railroad Administration, but we had a last minute schedule change and have now fully dedicated our hearing to the FAA. We will try to reschedule FRA for a later date.

Administrator Huerta, this is your fifth appearance before this Committee. We thank you for your distinguished record of service and look forward to your testimony today.

FAA is requesting \$15.9 billion in new budgetary resources for Fiscal Year 2017, a reduction of \$381 million below last year's level.

This reduction, however, is mostly due to a request to reduce the Airport Grants program by \$450 million, along with an increase to passenger fees. This has already been proposed and rejected a number of times.

Putting aside this artificial cut, we see an increase in the Operations account of \$85 million, a cut to Facilities and Equipment of \$17 million, and a \$1.5 million increase to the research budget.

We want to work with you to ensure that FAA's resources are put to work for the benefit to the flying public, while being a good steward for the American taxpayer. Together we face the challenges of:

- Advancing Next Gen
- Ensuring the right staffing levels at our air traffic control facilities, and
- Integrating UAS into the airspace

Together we must meet these challenges while protecting FAA's safety mission as the first priority. We have the safest, most complex airspace in the world, and we want to work with you to ensure that you continue to meet that mission.

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