

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 14, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
House Transportation & Infrastructure
Committee
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

I write to respectfully provide my priorities for the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization of 2023. I appreciate your consideration of the following priorities:

1. ***Air Traffic Control Facilities – ATC Level 8 Recruitment***

I request that ATC facilities given Level 8 rankings be able to recruit cadets from the FAA Air Traffic Control Academy (“The Academy”), just as Level 4-7 facilities. As it stands, Level 8 facilities are unable to pull cadets unless they are given Level 4-7 facility rankings from the FAA. This forces unnecessary burden on Level 8 facilities that must rely on the National Centralized EER Placement Process (“NCEPT”), or voluntary controller relocation requests which not only forces ATCs to wait on release dates, but also training times before a controller can be ready to operate. This limited pool has prevented Level 8 facilities from being able to advance to Level 9 during National Validation Team (“NVT”) upgrade inspections as they are forced to reduce services given the lack of available resources. The FAA needs to make Level 8 airports eligible for the air traffic controllers they need so our aviation system functions more smoothly.

2. ***Minimum Requirements for Aviation Enterprise Resource Management Systems***

I request that my bill, the *Flightmare Prevention Act of 2023*, be considered for inclusion in the final FAA Reauthorization package. This bill would require the FAA Administrator to issue regulations that establish minimum requirements for aviation enterprise resource planning systems. Currently, major air carriers can simply choose whether to update aviation enterprise resource planning systems, which control crew and flight scheduling. Unfortunately, outdated systems have led to mass cancellations and stranded passengers hundreds of miles away from their destination without any compensation. This has a significant effect on the safety and quality of air travel, and minimum enterprise resource planning system requirements are needed to prevent this.

3. ***Passenger Rights During Controllable Significant Air Travel Disruptions***

I request that my bill, the *Choices for Stranded Passengers Act of 2023*, be considered for inclusion in the final FAA Reauthorization package. This bill would require air carriers to provide passengers experiencing a controllable significant delay or cancellation with an alternative flight, including on another air carrier if necessary. This simply builds on commitments that the Department of Transportation (DOT) already has from six of the ten largest airlines to provide alternative transportation in the event of cancellations or delays at no additional cost. Further, the bill codifies the existing requirement for airlines to provide a full cash refund if the passenger chooses not to travel after experiencing such a delay or cancellation. This bill will make sure all passengers are made whole when their plans are impacted by a controllable disruption to their air travel.

4. ***Airline Passenger Seat Size***

I am requesting that my bill, *Stop Airplane Seat Shrinking Act*, be included in the final FAA Reauthorization package. This would require the FAA Administrator to prohibit air carriers from reducing the size of passenger seats on air carriers until the Administrator issues a final rule establishing minimum dimensions for passenger seats, as required under section 577 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (PL 115-254). According to recent reporting, airlines are “balancing passenger demand for cheap airfare and more legroom.” The size of a passenger seat is necessary for safety, especially during an aircraft evacuation. Additionally, taller passengers shouldn’t have to pay extra to sit in seats that accommodate larger legroom. This bill is an important stopgap to stop further seat shrinking until final rules take effect.

5. ***FAA Engagement and Transparency***

I am requesting that my bill, the *Federal Aviation Administration Engagement and Transparency Act*, be included in the final FAA Reauthorization package. The bill requires the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the response time of the FAA Administrator in regards to congressional inquiries and requests. It also requires the FAA Administrator to annually brief Congress on the agency’s efforts activities, objectives, plans, and efforts to engage with Congress and the public. This bill will ensure that the FAA is effective and transparent, especially as it implements the reauthorization.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. Should you have any questions, please contact my Legislative Assistant/ Natural Resources Advisor, Natalie Marek, at Natalie.Marek@mail.house.gov, or (202) 225-5611.

Sincerely,



Katie Porter
Member of Congress