





April 29, 2025

The Honorable Sam Graves Chairman Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure U.S. House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves:

The Alaska Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration (ACUASI) in the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) strongly supports *Section 100008 Air Traffic Control Staffing and Modernization* in the U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's budget reconciliation measure. The provisions in this section will strengthen the backbone of aviation across the country and help the U.S. maintain the safest airspace in the world.

The ACUASI team especially applauds the prioritization of aviation safety in remote locations demonstrated by the increased funding for the Don Young Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative. As Alaskans, we all know pilots who were killed in accidents involving inclement weather, so the proposed improvements in the availability and reliability of weather information will save lives. Additionally, the ability to rapidly repair these weather stations will prevent the spoilage of perishable air cargo needed by these communities while waiting for the weather stations to be repaired before cargo deliveries can be resumed.

The provisions in *Section 100008* also will facilitate the safe adoption of large unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) into the National Airspace System (NAS). These provisions will enable the improved weather information, enhanced communications capabilities, increased runway awareness, improved Air Traffic Control support, and other aviation safety systems needed to integrate large UAS into the airport environment. The enhanced airspace and airport awareness allows the UAS operator to know the locations of other aircraft in the area, take advantage of instrument approaches, and act as a traditional aircraft in the NAS.

The ACUASI team looks forward to working with the Committee to enact these important provisions to improve aviation safety and advance the safe integration of UAS throughout Alaska rest of the NAS.

Sincerely,

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Catherine F. Cahill, Ph.D. Director Alaska Center for Unmanned Aircraft Systems Integration

CC: The Honorable Troy Nehls