

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 14, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen,

As the Committee continues its work on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization, I wish to submit the following priorities for consideration in the upcoming legislation:

1. Increase the number of slot exemptions available for air carriers to operate on routes beyond the perimeter described in 49 U.S.C. §49109 to and from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) to allow for two non-stop slots (one daily round trip) to and from San Antonio International Airport (SAT) and DCA.

The Perimeter Rule established in 49 U.S.C. §49109 limits service to and from DCA to 1,250 statute miles. San Antonio is located 1,381 statute miles from DCA. Nonstop service to and from DCA and SAT would create a direct connection between both cities and would accommodate the large amount of passenger traffic between these destinations due to their shared military, medical, and technology sectors.

2. Increase authorized funding for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) from \$3,350,000,000 to \$5,000,000,000 per fiscal year.

This program provides critical funding to enhance airport safety and capacity. Because of consistent demand exceeding funding availability, the authorized level of funding for this program should be increased to allow more airports to make critical infrastructure improvements. Projects funded by this program are vital to ensuring American competitiveness and the security of our supply chains.

3. Reevaluate metrics used to determine the threshold of significant aircraft noise in regards to Airport Noise Compatibility Planning (14 C.F.R. Part 150).

Reassessing the use of “day-night average sound level” (DNL) and the current threshold of 65 decibels as an indicator of significant aircraft noise will ensure FAA is utilizing up-to-date metrics that reflect the impact of noise on airport communities. The current 65 decibel threshold was determined using data from 1978. Reevaluating the threshold of significant noise levels will ensure FAA accurately measures community sensitivity to aircraft noise and that these communities will have access to federal funds for noise mitigation projects.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me or my Legislative Director, Patrick O'Connor, at [Patrick.OConnor2@mail.house.gov](mailto:Patrick.OConnor2@mail.house.gov) should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Cuellar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "H" and a long, sweeping underline.

Henry Cuellar, Ph.D.  
U.S. Congressman  
28th District of Texas