



William J. Flynn
President & Chief Executive Officer

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June 26, 2017

Congressman Bill Shuster
Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2709 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster:

On behalf of Atlas Air, a leading provider of outsourced aviation services around the globe, I am writing to thank you for re-introducing the 21st Century Aviation Innovation, Reform & Reauthorization Act of 2017 (AIRR Act) and urge bipartisan support for the measure. The AIRR Act would maintain the Federal Aviation Administration's exceptional safety oversight of air traffic control (ATC) while moving the operations and funding of air traffic control to a federally chartered, non-profit organization governed and funded by the stakeholders and users of our nation's aviation system.

The U.S. economy depends on safe, reliable, and affordable air transportation. Our nation's aviation system operates 27,000 flights per day and carries 50,000 tons of cargo as well as 2 million passengers daily, and traffic continues to grow. Yet the current ATC system has not kept pace with advances in technology or the ever-increasing number of passenger and cargo flights that are straining an already fragile system. The problems caused by the outdated ATC system have cost the country \$30 billion in delays and rampant inefficiency. As a result, even some short routes are taking twice as long as they should to complete.

So far, efforts to modernize the ATC system have been costly and ineffective, largely because the governance and financing structure at the FAA has remained the same since its inception in 1958. In recognition of the need to enact long-term capital improvements to the ATC system, beginning in 2003, a federal air traffic modernization program known as NextGen was proposed to replace the traditional ground-based radar and other aging technologies with a GPS system. The new system was intended to take advantage of the latest technologies to reduce delays, save fuel and lower greenhouse-gas emissions via more efficient flight routes, and increase the capacity of the airspace. Fifteen years and billions of dollars later, the federal government has little to show for this investment. Efforts to reform the system have been further complicated by ongoing budgetary uncertainties at the FAA.

In recognition of these failures, the AIRR Act takes the long-overdue step of creating a federally chartered, fully independent, not-for-profit corporation to operate and modernize air traffic services that will be free from the bureaucratic inertia and funding uncertainty that have plagued the FAA for decades. The AIRR Act would transfer air traffic controllers to the new entity from the FAA, which would retain its core mission of aviation safety. This legislation would also accelerate progress towards performance-based navigation, optimized profile descent and airborne and surface traffic management, all of which would eliminate unnecessary fuel burn, shorten travel times and reduce congestion.

Both Republicans and Democrats understand that a modern, responsive ATC system should be prepared to work with all user groups to upgrade traffic controls, manage large capital infrastructure projects and pursue the most cost-efficient investments in a budget-conscious, timely fashion. With this in mind, I urge your colleagues to support the AIRR Act. This legislation will move us closer to a modernized air traffic control system which is vital to improving safety in our airspace and increasing air travel efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William J. Flynn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" and last name "Flynn" clearly distinguishable.

William J. Flynn
President & Chief Executive Officer