



June 11, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Garret Graves
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Cohen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairman Graves, and Ranking Member Cohen:

On behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) – the business voice of the nation’s engineering industry – I am writing to express our strong support for the *Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act*. This bipartisan legislation will deliver aviation and airport infrastructure policies that enhance safety, facilitate economic development, and meet the growing needs of the traveling public.

Our top priority in the aviation sector is designing 21st century infrastructure that supports the safe and reliable movement of people and goods. We are very pleased that the committee’s FAA reauthorization bill includes a substantial increase in authorized annual funding for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and an expansion of eligible uses for terminal projects. With passenger travel returning to pre-pandemic levels, the investments in your bill will help advance projects that are essential to relieving congestion, improving safety, and enhancing the passenger experience, all of which will promote economic growth in and around the airport facility.

We also appreciate the inclusion of Section 420 to authorize alternative project delivery methods. Our member firms are contracting with their airport clients in new and creative ways to align the interests of all parties with respect to project costs and outcomes. By increasing coordination and collaboration between all project participants – agency clients/owners, designers, builders, and labor partners – these project delivery methods have been successful in achieving cost savings and on-time project delivery.

ACEC also supports the provisions in Title VI to bolster aerospace innovation. Engineering firms utilize unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) for a wide array of services, including surveying, construction site monitoring, facility inspections, and wetlands mapping. As these technologies continue to develop and their capabilities improve, it is essential that FAA continue to develop a comprehensive system for safely integrating UAS and advanced air mobility (AAM) aircraft into the national airspace.

ACEC specifically supports provisions to enable beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations, which will empower our firms to safely undertake additional functions at project sites. We appreciate bill provisions for UAS testing, evaluation, and completion of a BVLOS rulemaking by a date certain for airworthiness and operational regulations. We also support Section 620 to establish a drone infrastructure inspection grant program for our state and local agency partners to facilitate the use of UAS for more efficient inspection, operation, construction, maintenance, modernization, and repair of critical infrastructure.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of the priorities of the engineering industry. We urge all members of the committee to support this important bipartisan bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda Bauer Darr". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".

Linda Bauer Darr
President & CEO