



●●● ISSUE SPOTLIGHT: GOOD FOR GENERAL AVIATION AND RURAL AVIATION

Claims that FAA reform will devastate rural and general aviation (GA) are wrong. The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee understands the needs of GA, rural and small communities, and how vital air service and airports are to those communities.

THAT IS WHY THE 21ST CENTURY AIRR ACT (H.R. 2997):

- Creates a new air traffic service provider that will be an independent corporation responsible for providing air traffic control (ATC) services on a not-for-profit basis. (Sec. 90301 and 90302, p. 56)
- Ensures the new service provider's entire mission will be to provide the safest, most efficient, and modern ATC services possible to all system users. (Sec. 201, p. 52; Sec. 90304, p. 59)
- Includes two general aviation (GA) seats on the Board of Directors of the new corporation to ensure parity in corporate governance. (Sec. 90306, p. 64)
- Legally prohibits the new ATC service provider from charging user fees to any segment of GA. (Sec. 90313, p. 83) Instead, GA will support the aviation system as it always has: through fuel taxes. (Sec. 803, p. 421)
- Prohibits the new service provider from unilaterally restricting airspace or airport access in any way. (Chapter 907, p. 114) GA operators will be guided through the national airspace operating under the same rules that apply today—with safety as the first priority.
- Requires any changes to ATC procedures to be in accordance with the law and approved by the FAA before they can be implemented. (Sec. 90501, p. 100)
- Requires that if the new service provider proposes to alter the airspace in a way that might restrict access, it would be subject to strict governmental review and approval. (Sec. 90705, p. 116)

- Designates a small community seat on the ATC service provider's Advisory Board to ensure small communities are part of the decision making process. [\(Sec. 90310, p. 76\)](#)
- Provides increased levels of Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding to ensure continued investments in small, rural, and general aviation airports. [\(Sec. 101, p. 7\)](#)
- Reforms and strengthens the Federal Contract Tower Program, a program that provides ATC services to many small and rural communities. [\(Sec. 134, p. 26\)](#)
- Includes a process for meaningful analysis of potential impacts as well as community involvement if a proposed airspace change would result in the closure of a contract tower. [\(Sec. 90703, p. 114\)](#) This is something that small communities do not have today. During sequestration the FAA targeted hundreds of contract towers for closure, and there was no process for communities to be involved in the decision making process.
- Establishes a remote air traffic control tower pilot program to test promising technology that could lower the costs of providing ATC services in small or rural communities and enable more ATC coverage in such communities. [\(Sec. 610, p. 341\)](#)
- Maintains programs important for rural aviation, including the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program, and the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP). [\(Sec. 551, p. 312, Sec. 554, p. 314\)](#)