



## Legislative Positions & Requests for Support

To: Colorado Congressional Delegations and Staff  
From: Colorado Airport Operators Association, Board of Directors  
Date: January 27, 2020

The Colorado Airport Operators Association (CAOA) serves the common interests of the owners, operators and users of the 74 public use airports located throughout the State of Colorado. CAOAs provides a unified voice for airport operators to State and Federal agencies, the General Assembly and the Congress of the United States of America, on proposed or pending legislation and regulations. The airports CAOAs represents would like to call to your attention the following legislative positions and requests in no particular order.

### 1. Request for Modernizing the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC)

CAOA would like to request your support to adjust and modernize the federal cap on Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) user fees by removing the current \$4.50 cap and allowing its periodic adjustment to offset the impacts of inflation. At a time when there is pressure to reduce federal spending modernizing the PFC cap would provide airports around the country with the locally controlled self-help needed to finance critical infrastructure projects without relying on scarce federal funds. Colorado's commercial service airports rely on a variety of infrastructure maintenance and improvement funding sources, including the existing Passenger Facility Charge (PFC), the cap on which has not been adjusted for increasing construction costs or inflation in 20 years. PFC's are one of the most efficient local funding mechanisms for commercial service airport infrastructure. CAOAs supports modernization of the existing PFC program to help Colorado's commercial service airports meet their burgeoning infrastructure needs

### 2. Request for increased Airport Improvement Program Funding

Similar to the Passenger Facility Charges, the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) has remained at a relatively static funding level since 2001 of \$3.35 billion. The distribution of these funds is critical to keep the nation's 3,300 public use airports functional. Over 70% of AIP funding is used for safety related projects and to maintain existing airport runways, taxiways, and aircraft parking aprons. While inflation has risen over 42% since 2001, AIP funding has remained constant. CAOAs is requesting that the annual appropriated AIP program funding be increased to a minimum of \$4.85 billion annually, which is equivalent to the 2001 amount adjusted for inflation.

### 3. Oppose the Aircraft Noise Reduction Act

CAOA strongly supports maintaining a public airport and airway system that provides open, equal and unrestricted access pursuant to federal law, including but not limited to the Interstate Commerce Act as amended.

### 4. Continued Refinement of the FAA's 2013 Air Carrier Flight Crew Qualifications Rules

FAA air carrier flight crew qualification rules were revised in 2013, creating an unintended consequence that challenges the supply of qualified air transport rated pilots, resulting in reduced commercial air service to some Colorado communities. CAOAs encourages and supports the continued evaluation and rationalization of FAA pilot qualification rules to ensure that both aviation safety and commercial air service pilot demand can be sustained.



**5. Support for Efforts, Policy, and Legislation that Bolsters Aviation Workforce Development and Training**

CAOA supports efforts, policy and legislation that will bolster aviation industry workforce development and training, and help develop the next generation of professionals needed to grow the aviation sector.

**6. Oppose Privatization of Air Traffic Control**

CAOA believes oversight, regulation and further development of our nation's Air Traffic Control system is best accomplished by maintaining current FAA and Congressional oversight. Rather than transferring control to a private board or entity which might have authority over funding mechanisms currently managed by the FAA for all aviation users, the continued oversight by the FAA and Congress best ensures the National Airspace System is managed with safety at the forefront.

**7. Support Remote Air Traffic Control Towers inclusion in the federal contract tower program**

CAOA supports the inclusion of language in any appropriate federal legislative vehicle that will provide for the inclusion of remote air traffic control towers in the Federal Contract Tower program, once such towers are certified by FAA.

**8. Support the Elimination of Financial Disincentives for Retiring FAA Air Traffic Controllers (S.2898) & (H.R. 5297)**

There currently exists a shortage of qualified air traffic controllers, which is partially driven by current policies. CAOA supports S.2898 & H.R. 5297, which have been introduced in the 116th Congress would eliminate financial disincentives for retiring FAA air traffic controllers who wish to be employed by air traffic control contractors after their tenure with FAA, thus helping reduce air traffic control workforce challenges.

**9. FAA NextGen/Denver Metroplex implementation**

CAOA supports the FAA's NextGen/Denver Metroplex implementation to improve the efficiency and safety of air traffic movements in and out of the Denver area; while also maintaining the quality of life in areas impacted by the FAA's Denver Metroplex initiative. CAOA urges the FAA to pursue a redesign of the Denver area airspace with no impact to aviation safety and efficiency for all users, nor to the environment and the quality of life of Colorado residents.

**10. PFAS (per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) aka Forever Chemicals**

Colorado airports are eager to use PFAS-free alternatives for fire suppression, but currently have no choice but use what is currently available and to comply with federal regulations. CAOA strongly believes that airports should not be held liable for significant remediation and cleanup costs associated with utilizing a firefighting product they are required to use by federal regulations, which extends to general aviation airports that currently do not have a suitable alternative. Any proposed legislation addressing PFAS remediation should include an exemption for commercially certified airports required to use these chemicals by federal mandate, and those airports that do not have a suitable alternative.