April 5, 2023

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation-HUD
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation-HUD
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley:

On behalf of Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA) – which represents local, regional and state governing bodies that own and operate commercial airports throughout the United States – I write to urge your consideration of the following requests for the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

**Fully fund the regular Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and provide additional AIP discretionary grants to airports of all sizes.** AIP is a crucial source of funding for capital-improvement projects that enhance safety, security, and capacity at airports of all sizes. According to the FAA’s most recent National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems, airports have $62.4 billion in AIP-eligible projects over the next five years – nearly $12.5 billion annually. In recent years, though, airports have received less than half that amount in annual AIP grants. Furthermore, ACI-NA’s latest [Airport Infrastructure Needs Study](#) estimates commercial service and general aviation airports have nearly $151 billion in capital needs through 2028, for AIP-eligible, PFC-eligible, and other necessary projects. Combined with a long-overdue adjustment in the federal cap on local PFCs, securing additional AIP funding with expanded eligibility would help all airports close the significant annual gap in infrastructure funding.

**Modernize the outdated federal cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC).** Airports of all sizes face over $151 billion in infrastructure-improvement needs over the next five years to modernize aging runways and terminals, relieve congestion and delays, and spur new airline competition. These annual
needs of over $30 billion far exceed the amount of federal grants and local user fees airports receive each year, even with the greatly appreciated influx in federal funding through the bipartisan infrastructure law. PFCs are local user fees approved locally, imposed locally, and used locally for specific projects approved by the FAA in consultation with the airlines. Last raised more than 20 years ago, the PFC cap has not kept pace with rising construction costs and inflation since it was last adjusted to $4.50 in 2000, and its purchasing power has eroded by over 50 percent. Modernizing the outdated federal cap on the PFC would give airports the self-help they need in the future to invest in the terminals, gates, and ramps necessary to attract new air carriers and entice existing ones to expand – thereby promoting competition and lowering airfares for their communities.

*Set aside $15 million within AIP for the Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP).* The ACRP carries out applied research on problems shared by airport operators and not addressed in other federal research programs. It has proven an invaluable resource for helping airports better understand and address many of the top issues facing the aviation industry.

*Fully fund the Small Community Air Service Development (SCASD) program.* Designed to assist smaller communities expand their air service options, the SCASD program has helped many small communities secure and promote air service enhancements responsive to their needs.

*Fully fund the Essential Air Service (EAS) program.* The EAS program provides a critical link to the national and international air transportation system for many small and rural communities.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests. ACI-NA looks forward to working with you in the development of this year’s bill. If we can be of any assistance, please contact Rachel Tristan at (202) 861-8096 or rtristan@airportscouncil.org.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Burke
President and CEO