



TEAM: AVIATION

Issue Experts:

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SUBJECT: HELP AIRPORTS FLORISH AS REGIONAL ECONOMIC ENGINES

REQUESTED ACTIONS:

Enhance Airport Infrastructure Investment

- Fully fund the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) at 2024 FAA Reauthorization levels of \$4.5 billion per year.
- Modernize the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) program by allowing user fee increases and streamlining the application process.
- Maintain and expand access to tax-advantaged financing tools for public-use airports.

Remove Regulatory Barriers to Growth

- Continue to streamline NEPA review processes by expanding categorical exclusions for non-federally funded projects.
- Expedite airport layout plan (ALP) reviews and remove duplicative FAA approval of master plans and forecasts.
- Revise land-use change policy to eliminate FAA review of lease agreements and increase local flexibility.

Prohibit Unfunded Federal Mandates and Cost-Shifting

- Exempt airports from CERCLA liability for historical use of PFAS-containing firefighting foam.
- Restore the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) responsibility for aviation worker screening.
- Fully fund TSA reimbursements for law enforcement officer (LEO) presence and explosives detection canine teams.
- Restore funding for TSA's National Explosives Detection Canine Team Program (NEDCTP).
- Prevent other attempts to impose unfunded federal mandates on airports.



HOW THIS SUPPORTS BUSINESSES:

Airports are foundational to regional economic competitiveness. In the Capital Region alone, more than a dozen public-use airports serve commercial passenger, cargo, training, and general aviation needs. These facilities support job creation across multiple industries and enable the rapid movement of goods and people that businesses rely on. Nationwide, airports generate \$1.8 trillion in total annual economic output and support 12.8 million jobs.

Business growth is contingent on airport infrastructure keeping pace with demand. Between 2025 and 2029, U.S. airports will require more than \$173.9 billion in infrastructure investment, while federal funding levels remain insufficient to meet that need. Terminal modernization alone accounts for 42% of this need. Without action, airports may be forced to turn away new airlines, limit route expansion, or delay upgrades, all of which hinder regional competitiveness.

Restoring sustainable federal funding, expanding local financing tools, and reducing regulatory delays will ensure airports remain engines of growth and access for generations to come.

HOW THIS SUPPORTS RESIDENTS OF OUR REGION:

Airports don't just move aircraft, they connect people, ideas, and opportunities. Whether it's traveling for work, visiting family, or serving as critical logistics sites during natural disasters, airports are deeply woven into daily American life. A strong, accessible airport system ensures the Capital Region's residents have direct access to key destinations, lower airfare through increased competition, and faster delivery of essential goods. At Sacramento International (SMF), passenger traffic has continued to exceed pre-pandemic levels, with the SMF serving a record 13.9 million travelers in 2025. As SMF continues to pursue expanded international connectivity and additional non-stop routes, federal funding flexibility will be essential to maintain competitiveness with peer markets.

Additionally, ensuring airports are environmentally and financially resilient benefits everyone. Prohibiting unfunded mandates, like those tied to CERCLA liability or worker screening, protects airport budgets and keeps costs down for users. Funding transitions

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to safer firefighting technologies and streamlining federal regulations empower airport operators to act swiftly in ways that prioritize safety, sustainability, and community well-being. Ultimately, supporting our airports is a direct investment in the long-term quality of life for everyone in the Capital Region.

APPENDIX:

- *Airports Council International – North America: 2025 U.S. Airport Infrastructure Needs Study*