

March 10, 2015

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
440 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart:

On behalf of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, Experimental Aircraft Association, General Aviation Manufacturers Association, Helicopter Association International, National Agricultural Aviation Association, National Air Transportation Association, and National Business Aviation Association, we write to thank you for your past support of the collaborative government and industry initiative to develop and deploy an unleaded avgas replacement for the current 100 octane low lead fuel. As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations legislation, we respectfully request that you support the FAA's FY 2016 budget request of \$6,000,000 for NextGen – Alternative Fuels for General Aviation (GA).

The purpose of this endeavor is to address the complex transition of the existing GA piston fleet, comprised of more than 200,000 aircraft, to an unleaded fuel. The support of your Subcommittee to this program in previous years has been used to further this effort through research and to launch the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative (PAFI), a robust program of testing and evaluations to identify suitable fuel replacements. Investment in this program this year and continuing through FY 2018 is essential to ensuring that the transition effectively balances environmental improvement with aviation safety, technical challenges, and economic impact.

Today, four candidate fuels are being evaluated through qualification and properties testing and PAFI is diligently analyzing potentially viable fuel(s) that will move on to full scale engine and aircraft field testing. Funding the program at the Administration's FY 2016 budget request will continue this progress and enable FAA to continue to conduct safety assessments and performance tests of candidate fuels, conduct comparison of fuel material compatibility with key airplane and fuel system components, and provide toxicological evaluation in order to identify the most viable replacement. The goal of this PAFI work is to identify and achieve the necessary FAA approvals and authorizations to enable the vast majority of the piston fleet of aircraft to operate on an unleaded fuel.

On behalf of the aforementioned organizations, which represent operators that utilize piston aircraft as well as those that manufacture, service, and maintain them, we look forward to working with you to facilitate this initiative. Thank you for your time, consideration, and past support which is critical to the safety and economic sustainability of the general aviation community.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Baker
President and CEO
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
AOPA



Jack Pelton
Chairman of the Board
Experimental Aircraft Association
EAA



Peter J. Bunce
President and CEO
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
GAMA



Matthew S. Zuccaro
President and CEO
Helicopter Association International
HAI



Andrew D. Moore
President and CEO
National Agricultural Aviation Association
NAAA



Thomas L. Hendricks
President and CEO
National Air Transportation Association
NATA



Ed Bolen
President and CEO
National Business Aviation Association
NBAA