



February 13, 2017

Senator Bill Nelson
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20150

Dear Senator Nelson:

On behalf of communities and small businesses across Florida, I invite you to a meeting with the Florida Aviation Business Association (FABA) and key business aviation stakeholders to discuss current challenges facing our national aviation system. We are specifically concerned about a current proposal to privatize the nation's air traffic control system and put it under the purview of a private board and away from congressional oversight.

As you may know, flights to small and mid-sized airports have been cut by 20 percent over the last decade. We are troubled that this proposal would hurt communities not near hubs, and further limit access to our nation's air transport system. We feel that Congress should retain its oversight over our air transportation system. It is best suited to ensure communities of all sizes are taken into account when decisions are made regarding infrastructure investment, levying new taxes and fees, and reducing slot and gate access, as well as a host of other issues which affect users and consumers from across the nation. We are also concerned that this proposal would be accompanied by user fees, which would bring additional economic harm to Florida and communities such as ours.

Around the country, there are 5,000 airports that connect communities, including many that rely exclusively on general aviation and smaller airports. As a board member of FABA and having spent a career supplying aviation fuel and services to airports and aviation businesses in Florida as well as across the US, I see firsthand the benefits that these airports and aircraft have for our communities and economies. For many of these communities, these airports and aircraft are a vital lifeline, connecting to economic growth, emergency medical care, law enforcement, disaster relief, aerial firefighting and other critical services.

In addition, Florida is home to a number of corporations that their businesses depend upon a strong airport system to support their employees and customers. Signature Flight Support is headquartered in Orlando, serving over thirteen (13) airports in communities across Florida. Sheltair Aviation is headquartered in Fort Lauderdale and operates seventeen (17) facilities alone in Florida airport communities. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach is a valuable treasure and

resource for our aviation communities and professionals enriching their aerospace careers. My employer, World Fuel Services, a publicly-traded company (NYSE: INT) headquartered in Doral, supplies aviation fuel to terminals, commercial airlines, military, airports and business throughout Florida, the US, and globally.

Collectively our businesses depend upon a strong airport system. Publix, one of Florida's largest Corporation, utilizes the benefit of business aircraft at the Lakeland Airport to grow their business, support their management, and serve communities throughout Florida and the Southeast. While we are very proud of our beaches and depend upon tourism, Florida is also home to a number of aircraft manufacturers such as Embraer, Piper and several light sport manufacturers (LSA).

As FABA, we respectfully request to meet with you at your district office or at one of our Florida airports to join with business and community leaders who are part of our national coalition, the Alliance for Aviation Across America, so that we can discuss these issues in further detail as Congress continues its work on the legislation to reauthorize the FAA.

Thank you for your interest and for checking your calendar. I can be reached by email or telephone below.

Sincerely,



Wesley Earl

FABA, Board Member, and Chair, Legislative Committee

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