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October 29, 2008

Honorable James Oberstar  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable John Mica  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation  
and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

On behalf of the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), I am grateful for the opportunity to provide comments regarding the economic stimulus achieved through infrastructure investment. In these challenging economic times, the importance of a robust transportation system cannot be overemphasized.

NBAA and our 8,000 member companies across the United States support the Committee's efforts to identify and prioritize national transportation infrastructure investment opportunities that will improve and modernize our nation's transportation system, as well as significantly contribute to economic growth and job creation.

Our national air transportation system is critical to the US economy, and we are committed to working with the Committee to transform and modernize this national asset. Aviation plays a critical role in driving economic growth and investment across the country. We strongly support the shared goal of keeping our aviation system the safest and most efficient system in the world.

As you know, there are over 5,000 public use airports in this country. Approximately 500 have commercial airline service, making General Aviation an economic lifeline for thousands of communities and an essential economic generator throughout the country. Additional investment in airports of all sizes will undoubtedly provide needed stimulus to cities and rural communities in all 50 states. In fact, for many communities, the local airport drives economic development in the area.

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Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica, NBAA would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing efforts to strengthen our aviation system through FAA reauthorization legislation. In September, 2007, the House approved the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 (H.R. 2881), that would provide multi-year funding for enhanced investment in FAA programs to modernize and expand the nation's air transportation system. We support this legislation and the goals of expanding system capacity through air traffic modernization and airport development, providing additional investment in safety programs, and further developing key environmental initiatives. H.R. 2881, as well as legislation currently pending in the Senate, will expedite the transformation of the system by building on the existing funding mechanisms. NBAA remains committed to working with the Congress to complete the reauthorization process as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Bolen", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ed Bolen  
President and CEO