



April 11, 2023

The Honorable Brian Schatz
 Chairman
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Transportation, Housing and Urban
 Development, and Related Agencies
 Room S-128, The Capitol
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
 Chairman
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Transportation, Housing and Urban
 Development, and Related Agencies
 2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
 Ranking Member
 Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Transportation, Housing and Urban
 Development, and Related Agencies
 S-146, The Capitol
 Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Quigley
 Ranking Member
 House Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Transportation, Housing and Urban
 Development, and Related Agencies
 1036 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Schatz, Chairman Cole, Ranking Member Hyde-Smith, and Ranking Member Quigley:

The Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) represents more than 300 aerospace and defense companies, from America's leading manufacturers of commercial aircraft, engines, satellites, and launch vehicles, to family-owned businesses comprising our supply chain. Our industry contributes daily to our country's safety, security, and success. As a major driver of the U.S. economy, we employ more than two million Americans across all 50 states, contributing \$391 billion to the nation's GDP in 2021 alone. Civil aviation is a critical sector of the U.S. economy and the manufacturing industry's largest contributor to a positive U.S. trade balance. Developing a proper policy framework and aligning it with federal investment and incentives can help propel these advancements even further. Upcoming appropriations legislation provides us with a unique opportunity to do just that. AIA appreciates the strong support for FAA programs provided in past years by the appropriations committees, and respectfully makes the following requests related to FAA programs in the Department of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024.

ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE PILOT PROGRAM (\$12.5 MILLION)

AIA thanks the committee for the inclusion of Division Q Sec. 101 Advanced Air Mobility Infrastructure Pilot Program in FY23. This program is essential for communities around the country to begin planning for the inclusion of AAM within their transportation systems. We appreciate the authorization of \$12.5 million in appropriations for FY24 and urge the committee to fully appropriate this funding.

ADVANCED AVIATION ALTIMETER RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (\$25 MILLION)

AIA recommends the creation of an Advanced Aviation Altimeter Research and Development program, with a 50-50 industry cost share, that incentivizes radar altimeter manufacturers in the research, identification, and development of new altimeter technologies.



On January 9, 2023, the FAA issued a 5G Retrofit Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and is expected to issue a final rule this Spring, requiring all commercial aircraft to retrofit their radar altimeters by July 1, 2023. While radar altimeter manufacturers have been working with the FAA and telecommunications companies since their voluntary agreement in January 2022, this retrofit requirement is a temporary solution to minimize disruption for air transport and allow for additional 5G deployment. Ultimately, a new 5G standard for radar altimeters must be adopted by the FAA for next generation altimeters to be designed, certified, and eventually fielded. While in progress, these standards are still years away from completion. Until then, the aviation industry will be limited in its ability to accommodate all future desired uses of C-band spectrum adjacent to the radar altimeter band. \$25 million in funding would significantly accelerate new technologies with the goal of reducing long-term and future disruptions to U.S. air transportation caused by the potential interference of 5G signals.

AVIATION AND AEROSPACE TALENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (\$3.6 MILLION INCREASE)

AIA supports the President's Budget Requested increase of \$3.65 million for the FAA's Aviation and Aerospace Talent Development Program. The request includes funding for the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Aviation and Space Education (STEM AVSED) program, which helps K-12 students explore aviation and aerospace career options while promoting STEM learning, as well as expanded internship opportunities at Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) and grants under the National Air Grant Fellowship Program. AIA supports the requested levels of \$1.1 million for STEM AVSED, \$2 million for MSI internships, and \$514,000 for the Samya Rose Stumo Air Grant fellowship. These expanded programs will broaden FAA's outreach across the country and engage prospective aviation and aerospace students concerning careers in the aerospace industry and the skills and training required for those jobs.

AVIATION SAFETY OPERATING FUNDS (\$351.3 MILLION)

AIA supports the President's Budget Request of \$351.3 million, a \$30.9 million increase over FY23 in FAA's "Operations" appropriation, Aviation Safety (AVS) subaccount, designated to increase staffing and associated support services for the Aircraft Certification Service's support of new technologies and fulfilling the requirements of the 2020 "Aviation Certification, Safety and Accountability Act" (ACSAA). This legislation created significant new responsibilities for the FAA that affect staffing, training, and workload requirements. At the same time, emerging technologies and new aviation entrants require increasing resources and priority within FAA's Aircraft Certification Service.

Growth for new aviation entrants is stalled because of the lack of type certificated aircraft in the Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) sectors and delays in the supplemental type certification of safety-enhancing technologies for existing aircraft. New entrants cannot easily navigate the FAA type and supplemental type certification processes because of the shortage of regulations and guidance material, and limited staffing in both the Los Angeles ACO and the Small Airplane and Small Rotorcraft standards branch. This shortfall is inhibiting new entrants from bringing their products to market. Furthermore, there are several different designs of AAM and UAS aircraft in development, and significant certification efforts on safety-enhancing technologies by both established manufacturers and new entrants. As these products get closer to deployment, it puts greater strain on FAA's certification resources, especially as the agency ramps up its implementation of ACSAA's reforms. With a portion of this funding, AIA recommends that FAA leverage commercially available technology to create and maintain a secure



FAA online portal for applicants and the agency to track the real-time status of certification-related activities, including the status of a specific application or document under review, which offices are scheduled to review the submission, and timelines for completion of the process.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH (\$116.144 MILLION)

We appreciate the strong Congressional support for this program in the appropriations process, including for the Continuous Lower Emissions, Energy and Noise (CLEEN) program and for work in sustainable aviation fuels and other sustainability initiatives at the Aviation Sustainability Center of Excellence (ASCENT). FAA’s environmental sustainability research program is a small but vital contributor to meeting our national goals to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gases caused by the aviation sector worldwide. Details of our request for the two budget lines are shown below:

“Environment and Energy”. —We recommend the requested level of \$21.305 million for the “Environment and Energy” budget line in FY2024. This finances critical research by the university consortium known as ASCENT and supports FAA positions and leadership in international environmental bodies including the International Civil Aviation Organization’s Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP).

“Aircraft Technologies and Fuels”. —We recommend \$94.839 million for “Environmental Research - Aircraft Technologies and Fuels. This impacts research on alternative jet fuels, the ASCENT Center of Excellence (COE) and the Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions and Noise (CLEEN) program. AIA recommends no less than the FY23 enacted level of \$26.565 million of the ASCENT COE. The CLEEN program entered its third phase, called CLEEN III, in FY2021. Operating on a minimum 1:1 cost-share basis with industry, CLEEN has developed and demonstrated, at high technology readiness levels (TRLs), several aircraft technologies that reduce both emissions and noise. Given the strong and continuing demand for this program and the leveraging of private sector funding, we urge Congress to provide \$62 million in FY24 funding for CLEEN, an increase of \$24 million over the FY24 President’s Budget Request. This will expand the program beyond the \$38 million provided in FY2023. With increased program funding of \$24 million, we encourage the FAA to consider proposals from new entrants to the aviation system.

NEXT GENERATION AIR TRANSPORTATION (NEXTGEN) PROGRAM (\$979 MILLION)

AIA supports no less than the FY23 enacted level of funding for FAA’s Next Generation Air Transportation (NextGen) program. This would be an increase of \$2 million above the President’s Budget Request. This program modernizes FAA’s air traffic control and air traffic management systems around the nation, providing efficiencies and safety improvements for both commercial and general aviation users that also reduce aviation’s environmental impact and improve FAA’s level of service to aviation users. Given the unmet needs to efficiently support both traditional aviation users and emerging technologies and the urgency of addressing runway incursions and the Notice to Air Missions systems, we encourage Congress to provide no less than the FY2023 level of \$979 million.

RESEARCH, ENGINEERING & DEVELOPMENT (\$255.1 MILLION)

AIA supports the President’s Budget Request of \$255.1 million for the FAA’s Research, Engineering & Development Account. AIA supports utilizing this funding for the FAA to collaborate with NASA, the FCC, and industry to develop a Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) technical standard, allocate protected spectrum



for V2V, and issue certification and operational approval guidance. This technical standard is necessary to support new aviation entrants including AAM and will be necessary to enable secure aircraft-to-aircraft communications at the volumes of operations which are projected. Onboard V2V technology will allow secure aircraft-to-aircraft messages for automated collision avoidance and traffic management, which will enable new entrants and legacy users of the National Airspace System to co-exist safely.

In addition, Collision Avoidance Systems X program (ACAS X) is developing a safety-enhancing replacement for the existing Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS II) to support NextGen operations. ACAS X is a critical enabling technology to support UAS operations (ACAS Xu) and small UAS (ACAS sXu), and rotorcraft (ACAS Xr). AIA supports providing additional resources to FAA's existing NextGen – Unmanned Aircraft Systems program will enable the agency to complete the development and standardization of ACAS Xr for both crewed and uncrewed rotorcraft and electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) and the enhancement of ACAS Xu to support terminal area operations.

SEC. 625 WORKFORCE GRANT PROGRAMS – MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS, PILOTS, AND AVIATION MANUFACTURING (\$30 MILLION)

AIA strongly supports no less than \$30 million for the workforce development grant program authorized by Section 625 of the 2018 FAA Reauthorization Act. This Act authorized \$5 million for each of fiscal years 2019 through 2023 to help address critical shortfalls in the aviation maintenance workforce, and the same amount for grants to support the commercial pilot workforce. We appreciate the increased appropriation of \$10 million for maintenance technicians in FY23 and support its continuation and expansion. Under the law, applications may be submitted by air carriers or labor organizations representing airline pilots; accredited institutions of higher education, high schools, and secondary schools; state and local governments; flight schools; and (in the case of maintenance technicians) aviation maintenance certificate holders or labor organizations representing those workers. This funding has broad stakeholder support and is needed to address well-documented shortages in these workforces that threaten to undermine the growth and competitiveness of the aviation sector. There is strong demand for the continuation and expansion of this program to aviation manufacturing indicated by legislation introduced in the last six months by Senators Duckworth and Moran (S. 5236, the Aviation Workforce Development Enhancement Act), Congressman Rick Larsen (H.R. 9662, the Aviation WORKS Act), and Senators Kelly and Fischer (S. 368, the Aviation WORKS Act). Consistent with these recent proposals, we urge Congress to appropriate at least \$10 million for each workforce sector — maintenance technicians, pilots, and aviation manufacturing — in FY2024 to continue this important program.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNIZATION (\$340.8 MILLION)

AIA supports the President's Budget Request of \$340.8 million for modernization of the FAA's Telecommunications Infrastructure (FTI). Additionally, AIA recommends that within the funding provided in the request, the FAA must ensure that the migration from existing Time Division Multiplexing (TDM) technology to a more modern Internet Protocol (IP) infrastructure is fully funded and prioritized, in line with the FAA's indication of this as critical for the safety of the National Airspace System as well as its precursor status for successful FAA Enterprise Network Services (FENS) implementation.



OFFICE OF COMMERCIAL SPACE TRANSPORTATION (\$42 MILLION)

AIA supports the President's Budget Request of \$42 million for the Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST). With the increased number of launch and reentry licenses, AST requires increased funding to maintain a timely approval process necessary for continued growth in the U.S. commercial space sector and to support U.S. government civil and national security launches.

SPACE INTEGRATION CAPABILITIES (\$10 MILLION)

AIA supports an increase of \$2.85 million above the President's Budget Request of \$1 million for space data integration and \$6.15 million for commercial space research, engineering, and development. An increase in funding to \$10 million will further the development of tools to integrate commercial launch and aviation more efficiently in the national airspace as well as conduct TNT equivalency testing to better enable new commercial launch capabilities.

AIA and our member companies thank you for your leadership and your consideration of our funding priorities for the FAA. For further information, please reach out to Jeffrey.Wilson@aia-aerospace.org.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jeffrey Wilson' in a cursive script.

Jeffrey Wilson
Senior Director of Legislative Affairs
Aerospace Industries Association