

May 29, 2013

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
2406 RHOB
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

**Similar letter sent to Representatives Latham,
Lowey, Pastor, and Senators Mikulski, Murray,
Shelby and Collins**

Dear Chairman Rogers:

Thank you for your strong support of the FAA Contract Tower Program. As Congress continues work on the Department of Transportation/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) FY 2014 appropriations bill, the organizations listed below urge you to provide \$150 million in dedicated funding for the contract tower program, which includes \$10.35 million authorized for the continuation of the contract tower cost-sharing program. This funding level will fund the current contract towers in addition to several non-towered airports eligible for the program and will continue this important FAA safety program, which, as you know, was targeted for a disproportionate cut in recent months as a result of sequestration.

Events of recent months have made it abundantly clear that the FAA Contract Tower Program enjoys strong bipartisan support in both Chambers, and we urge Congress to dedicate funding to the program for FY 2014. Moreover, should sequestration again be applied in FY 2014, we urge Congress to help protect and ensure that the FAA Contract Tower Program is treated equitably and fairly in the process.

The FAA Contract Tower Program has provided cost-effective and essential air traffic safety services since 1982. Currently, 251 smaller airports in 46 states participate in the program, including two in Kentucky. Together these 251 towers handle approximately 28 percent of all air traffic control tower (ATCT) aircraft operations in the U.S. but account for just 14 percent of FAA's overall budget allotted to total ATCT tower operations. More importantly, the safety and efficiency record of the FAA Contract Tower Program has been validated numerous times by the DOT Inspector General, as well as by the National Transportation Safety Board.

All federal contract controllers are FAA-certified air traffic controllers who meet the identical training and operating standards as FAA-employed controllers. The vast majority of federal contract controllers have FAA or military air traffic control experience. FAA controls and oversees all aspects of the federal contract tower program, including operating procedures, staffing plans, certification and medical tests of contract controllers, security and facility evaluations. Moreover, federal contract towers operate together with FAA-staffed facilities throughout the country as part of a unified national air traffic control system.

As a result of this 31-year government/industry partnership, the FAA Contract Tower Program: (1) enhances aviation safety at smaller airports that otherwise would not have a tower; (2) provides significant cost savings to FAA and taxpayers; (3) helps small airports with retaining and developing commercial air service and general aviation; (4) promotes economic development and creates jobs in local communities; and (5) consistently receives high marks for customer service from aviation users and pilots. The bottom line is that, absent this highly successful federal program, many local communities and smaller airports would not receive the significant safety benefits of ATC services.

We thank you for your continued support of this important ATC safety program and look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure its future success.

Sincerely yours,



J. Spencer Dickerson
Senior Executive Vice President
American Association of Airport Executives
U.S. Contract Tower Association



Craig L. Fuller
President and CEO
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

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Letter to Chairman Rogers

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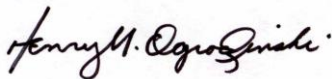
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Thomas L. Hendricks
CEO and President
National Air Transportation Association



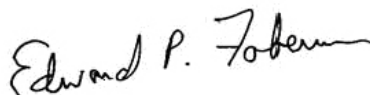
Ed Bolen
President & CEO
National Business Aviation Association



Henry M. Ogrodzinski
President
National Association of State Aviation Officials



Greg Principato
President
Airports Council International - NA



Edward P. Faberman
Executive Director
Air Carrier Association of America



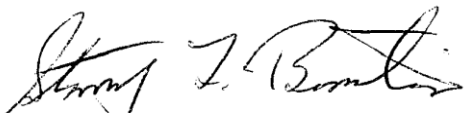
Pete Dumont
President
Air Traffic Control Association



Roger Cohen
President
Regional Airline Association



Stephen A. Alterman
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Cargo Airline Association



Stanley Bernstein
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