



**National Air Carrier Association**

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October 13, 2015

Honorable Orrin G. Hatch  
Chairman  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
Ways and Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office  
Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

Honorable Ron Wyden  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Sander Levin  
Ranking Member  
Ways and Means Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth House Office  
Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Hatch and Ryan, Ranking Members Wyden and Levin:

National Air Carrier Association (NACA)<sup>1</sup> represents a diverse interests of sixteen scheduled, passenger charter, and cargo airlines. Our member airlines operate domestically and in every part of the world on behalf of the U.S. military and commercial customers.

Our member carriers strongly believe investing in our infrastructure is a critical component in keeping our highways, seaways and aviation systems vibrant and safe. We understand, however, that a possible source for highway funding may come, in part, from an increase in the aviation passenger fees collected by U.S. Custom and Border Protection (CBP). We strongly oppose using CBP fees for anything outside their currently designated use.

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<sup>1</sup> NACA Members: Air Transport International, Allegiant Air, Atlas Air, Eastern Airlines, Everts Air Cargo, Kalitta Air, Lynden Air Cargo, Miami Air International, National Airlines, Northern Air Cargo, Omni Air International, Southern Air, Spirit Airlines, Sun Country Airlines, USA Jet Airlines, Western Global Airlines.

CBP has faced, and continues to face, significant staffing issues at various airports around the country. Staffing has increased in recent years with the addition of CBP officers. Additional officers are needed as air travel and demand continue to grow. The investment in technologies like Global Entry kiosks has helped to push long wait times at our major international airports down but require significant investment. If fees now used for CBP purposes are diverted to outside programs such as highway construction, such actions jeopardize progress in new technologies and threaten future advances.

U.S. Travel Association and a host of other industry associations have raised similar concerns. They correctly note the Administrative Conference of the United States has developed detailed recommendations for Congress to consider when imposing user fees. The number one recommendation of the Conference is that “[a] government service for which a user fee is charged should directly benefit fee payers.” A user fee is nothing more than a tax increase absent this payer benefit. In this case, airline passengers should not be used as a piggy bank to pay for highway investments that benefit highway users. Additionally, using Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security fees to offset the deficit in the Bipartisan Budget Act was a misguided policy choice that redirected important security funds away from their intended and needed use. To charge travelers more without an increase in service or benefit cannot and should not become a common practice for policy makers.

Thank you for your consideration of our views as you work towards adequately funding our many infrastructure needs. We look forward to working with you and answering any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Oakley Brooks". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

A. Oakley Brooks  
President