

# NACA

## Washington Wire

14 April 2021



### **NACA Meeting with Administrator Dickson**

On April 8, NACA staff had a very amicable 30-minute virtual meeting with FAA Administrator Steve Dickson. We raised the following issues: our strong concern about attempts on Capitol Hill to move cargo pilots under the Part 117 rest and duty requirements currently imposed upon passenger carrier pilots, our gratitude for the Administrator granting our request for an extension of the FAA's Special Emphasis Enforcement Program for disruptive passengers, our interest in the seat pitch issue and the forthcoming study to be released by the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute, our support for Office of Management and Budget approval of Draft Advisory Circular (AC) 120-85B, and lastly our gratitude for the tremendous work the staff at the FAA has done during the pandemic. We expect this to become a quarterly meeting with the Administrator to discuss key NACA issues and to receive updates.

### **NACA Joins Industry Letter Proposing Delay to ICAO Screening Requirement**

NACA joined the Cargo Airline Association, Air Forwarders Association, and the Express Association of America in a letter to the TSA Administrator asking for a one-year delay to the June 30 deadline for implementing the International Civil Aviation Organization outbound explosive screening requirement. TSA is still conducting risk assessments on important issues, including an exemption for on-demand, whole aircraft charters. Until these assessments are complete and carriers understand all their options, they cannot meet the deadline.

### **COVID Contract Tracing Coming Soon**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is expected to issue a formal order in the next couple of weeks requiring contact tracing for COVID-19 for all passengers inbound to the United States. NACA has discussed various implementation issues we expect to be addressed in the upcoming order with FAA, CDC, and Homeland Security. Carriers will have 100 days to implement the requirement after issuance – we believe all of our passenger carriers will be able to meet the deadline.

### **Payroll Support Program**

On March 11, President Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief American Rescue Plan, including \$14 billion to extend the CARES Act airline payroll assistance program (PSP) for U.S. passenger carriers through September 2021. Congressional staff have been told by Treasury officials that carriers who were eligible for the second round of PSP funds approved in December 2020 will not have to submit a new application to receive additional assistance. Under a new streamlined application process intended to expedite the transmittal of funds, carriers will receive a notice of eligibility and then execute a new agreement and certification. We will work closely with congressional staff and Treasury officials to ensure that NACA passenger carriers receive their PSP funds expeditiously.

*(next page)*



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## Postal Service Cuts

United States Postal Service Postmaster General Louis DeJoy issued his long-awaited proposal to reform the postal service. It would reduce service, increase prices and significantly cut air service, prompting significant criticism. NACA is leading the effort, along with A4A and the Cargo Airline Association, in drafting a letter strongly opposing these proposed changes.

## White House Unveils Infrastructure Proposal

On March 31, the White House unveiled its \$2 trillion infrastructure proposal, The American Jobs Plan, including \$25 billion for aviation infrastructure projects. We have been told by White House officials that the aviation infrastructure funding covers three major areas: supplemental FAA Airport Improvement Program funds with a priority on reducing carbon emissions and mitigating noise; a new airport terminal competitive grant program to fund projects put on hold by the COVID-19 pandemic; and replacement and modernization of the nation's physical air traffic control infrastructure. We asked the administration and will work with Congress to ensure that smaller and medium-sized airports receive a robust share of additional improvement assistance. The Administration's proposal did not include an increase in the passenger facility charge cap, but the House will likely include an increase in its infrastructure bill. We have urged Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) to oppose an increase in the charge in the Senate bill because of the disproportionate impact it would have on ULCCs and other smaller passenger carriers.

## Maryland Minimum Wage Legislation Modified to Exempt Airlines

NACA submitted testimony and joined a lobbying campaign with A4A, Southwest Airlines, the Maryland Department of Transportation and officials from Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) to mitigate the financial impact of The Secure Maryland Wage Act of 2021 (SB 107), increasing the minimum wage to \$18 per hour for workers at BWI, Penn Station and the Port of Baltimore. On April 9, House and Senate conferees granted our request to exempt airline workers from the legislation, which is expected to become law later this month.

## FAA Technical Matters

The advisory circular on the safety risks assessment for cargo was discussed with FAA and the joint comments from NACA and CAA were posted to the AC draft website. Please remember the new AC on weight and balance is required in June, potentially forcing airlines to adjust passenger weights and processes. Please let us know if you need NACA's help in completing your approvals. Also, please be aware that many of the COVID exemptions expired at the end of March.

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