

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Chairwoman Lowey, and Chairman DeFazio:

I write to express my strong support for providing assistance through the Airport Improvement Program to our nation's airports due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Passenger boardings are down significantly across the country, placing great financial strain on the ability of our airports to maintain their operations and workforce. At Sky Harbor International Airport in my hometown of Phoenix, Arizona, boardings are down 50 percent compared to last year. The revenue stream at Sky Harbor and other airports is activity based and when that activity is reduced significantly, as it has under this emergency, the funds to maintain day-to-day operations also disappear. With 90 percent of their costs fixed, airports like Sky Harbor have very limited flexibility to meet their financial obligations.

It is imperative that Congress provide additional resources through the Airport Improvement Program to aid airports and expand the eligibility of these funds to allow them to be used for staffing, workforce retention, cleaning, and other pressing needs. At Sky Harbor, ongoing construction projects are funded by debt service payments and if they are unable to make these payments, they will be forced to shut down these projects, which would result in the loss of more than 3,500 jobs. While Sky Harbor has halted all future capital expenditures, it is important they keep these existing construction jobs underway.

Finally, it is important to note that any assistance Congress provides to support the airlines will not trickle down to our airports. In fact, airlines have asked Sky Harbor to defer their rent payments, which places further strain on the airport. If we are going to support the airlines in this difficult time, which we need to do, it is equally important for us to support our airports and their workers.

Thank you for your leadership during this extraordinary time and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress