

December 20, 2019

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ranking Member Sam Graves
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Garret Graves
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Peter DeFazio and Rick Larsen and Ranking Members Sam Graves and Garret Graves:

We are writing to express our opposition to H.R. 5423, the Aircraft Noise Reduction Act (ANRA), that aims to severely restrict access to general aviation airports. This legislation seeks to impose restrictions at the local level, thereby undercutting the utility and safety of thousands of airports across our nation and reversing course on the need to regulate aviation matters at the federal level, which Congress has recognized since the 1920's.

By enacting the Airport Noise and Capacity Act (ANCA) in 1990, Congress affirmed that aviation should be federally regulated, and stopped an epidemic of local noise restrictions that had begun to threaten the efficiency and safety of our nation's airports. ANCA provides an effective process for scrutinizing noise and other access restrictions that is managed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). ANCA and other laws and regulations currently in place have proven successful over the last 30 years, allowing for public input and for airports, air carriers and general aviation operators to thrive in the safest and most efficient National Airspace System (NAS) in the world. Further, ANCA and the extensive aircraft noise regulation and policy regime of which it is a part, have resulted in tremendous noise reduction, with the number of people exposed to significant levels of aircraft noise in the United States dropping by 94 percent since the late 1970s, even as enplanements more than quadrupled.

However, instead of using the ANCA process, H.R. 5423 would allow general aviation airport owners and operators to impose local restrictions on the operation of aircraft used for compensation or hire. These aircraft operate a diverse range of missions that form the backbone of our nation's economy, from connecting small towns and communities by transporting people and equipment, air ambulances that save lives by moving patients and organs, to assisting in disaster relief. These aircraft are vital to conducting flight training and to helping rebuild our scarce aviation workforce. Operations of these aircraft support a vast variety of jobs at a broad range of income levels across the country. Additionally, these operations are a vital source of local revenue and thus help our general aviation airports be self-sustaining.

H.R. 5423 aims to dismantle our national system of airports and to undermine ANCA and nearly a century of precedent. Undercutting the role reliever airports play, H.R. 5423 could shift operations to commercial airports, many of which are already capacity constrained. Instead of working with industry to develop solutions, this legislation could simply shift any direct noise impacts to other neighborhoods

and cause a cascade of delays and other impacts throughout the NAS. H.R. 5423 would also deal a devastating economic blow to airports and the many communities and businesses that depend on them and the operators that support them.

Uniform federal authority is an essential predicate to the safe and efficient administration of the NAS. Any changes to this well-established process will open the door to a tangle of conflicting local regulations, encouraging inefficiencies and jeopardizing safety.

Enabling unwarranted airport restrictions on aviation users would be detrimental to our industry and the NAS and therefore, we urge the Committee to oppose the legislation and not to advance H.R. 5423.

Thank you for considering our views on these important issues.

Sincerely,

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Airlines for America
Cargo Airline Association
Experimental Aircraft Association
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
Helicopter Association International
National Air Transportation Association
National Business Aviation Association
Regional Airline Association

CC:

Congressman Joe Neguse