

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

December 9, 2016

The Honorable Donald Trump
President-Elect of the United States
Transition Team Headquarters – Trump Tower
725 5th Avenue
New York, New York 10022

The Honorable Mike Pence
Vice President-Elect of the United States
Transition Team Headquarters – Trump Tower
725 5th Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear President-Elect Trump and Vice President-Elect Pence:

We write to you knowing you are busy moving forward with transition plans for your Administration, reviewing agencies and individual programs for importance and effectiveness. As you begin review of the Department of Transportation, and specifically the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), we would like to call your attention to the Federal Aviation Administration's Contract Tower Program, believing you will find it to be an important and cost-effective program that brings safety to our skies and connects small-town America to the rest of the country.

The Contract Tower Program has been in place for over 30 years and exemplifies how the private sector and federal government can partner together to improve air traffic safety in a proven cost-effective manner for the FAA and the American taxpayers. As you may be aware, having flown into some yourself over the past several months, currently, 253 airports and their surrounding communities in 46 states benefit from the enhanced safety and improved air traffic control (ATC) services provided by FAA contract towers. Federal air traffic controllers do an excellent job managing air traffic control (ATC) services at control towers located at larger airports across the country, but to provide these FAA-staffed ATC services at several hundred of our nation's smaller airports and throughout rural America is not affordable. So that people living and traveling to our small communities and rural areas still benefit from the safety services control towers provide, federal contract towers supplement FAA-staffed facilities around the nation. These towers reinforce a unified national ATC system and play a vital role in connecting smaller airports and rural America with the national air transportation system.

Not only do these contract towers provide an important safety service, but they do so in a cost-effective fashion as validated in numerous reports by the Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General. FAA contract towers handle approximately 28 percent of all U.S. air traffic control tower operations, but account for just 14 percent of FAA's overall budget allotted

to such tower operations. Additionally, the Contract Tower Program arguably provides FAA and American taxpayers annual savings of approximately \$198 million (approximately \$1.98 billion over the past ten years).

Also worth noting, this program provides significant support for military readiness/training and national security operations. Indeed, 47 percent of all military operations at civilian airports in the U.S. occur at airports with FAA contract towers. Moreover, the vast majority of controllers hired by the private air traffic control companies are former FAA or military controllers and approximately 70 percent of these contract controllers are veterans.

We urge your Administration to take the necessary steps to ensure that this highly successful government and industry partnership continues to provide these critical ATC safety services, which will provide stability and economic growth in rural America. Earlier this year, the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and the full Senate passed separate legislation (H.R. 4441 and S. 2658) that would provide long-needed regulatory reforms to the benefit cost analysis process used by the FAA to manage this program. We encourage your Administration to review these measures as part of your efforts to provide regulatory relief and cut bureaucratic red tape to American industries and businesses that will help grow our economy.

As you continue to develop transportation policy for your new Administration, we want to assure you that the FAA Contract Tower Program is one that enhances aviation safety, is cost effective, and has demonstrated widespread bipartisan and bicameral support in Congress. We look forward to working with you in the coming years to support this important program and are prepared to be resources for you as needed.

Sincerely,



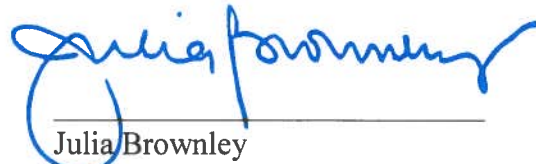
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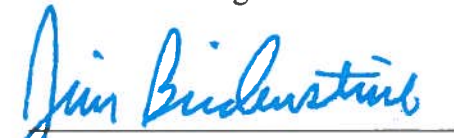

Ron DeSantis
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Billy Long
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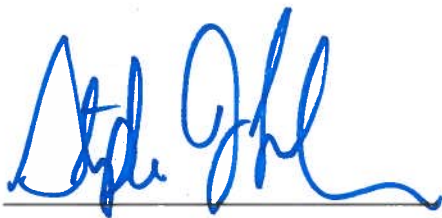

Andy Harris
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Walter Jones
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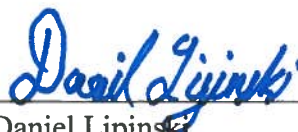

Blaine Luetkemeyer
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Jim Bridenstine
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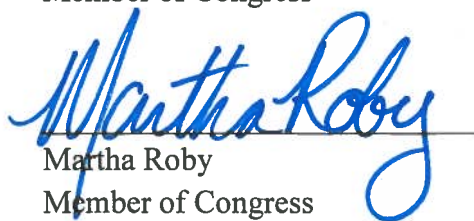

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Daniel Lipinski
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Martha Roby
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Joe Courtney
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Steven Palazzo
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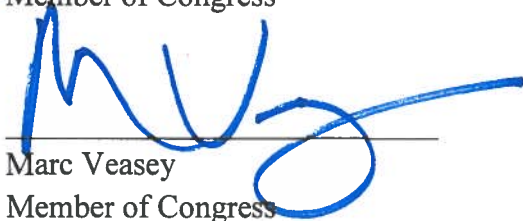
Ralph Abraham, MD
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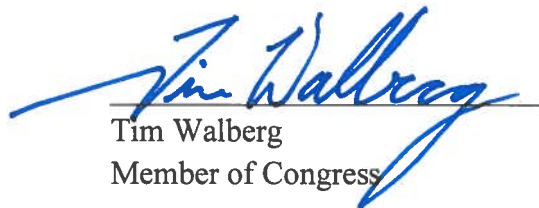
Aumua Amata C. Radewagen
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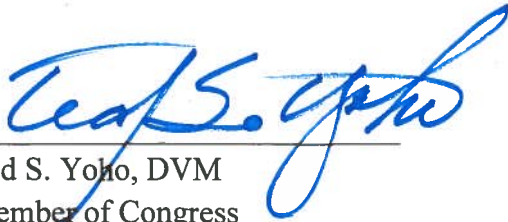
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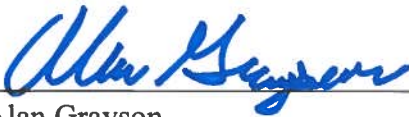
Scott Peters
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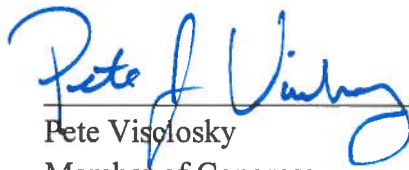
Jared Polis
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Alan Grayson
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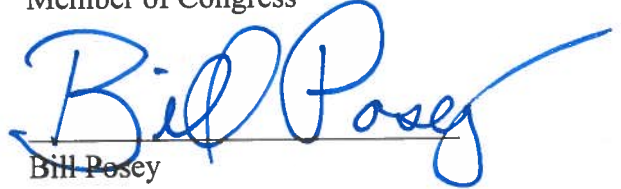
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Glenn 'GT' Thompson
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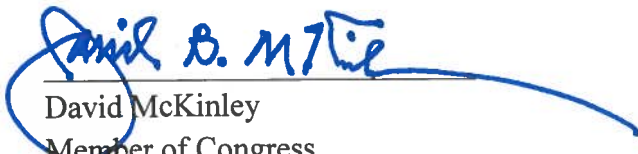
Sam Johnson
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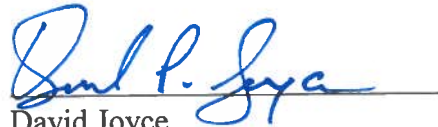
Lamar Smith
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David McKinley
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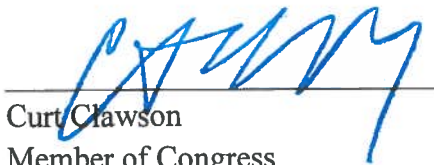
David Joyce
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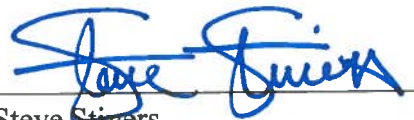
Gregg Harper
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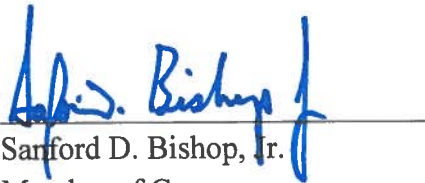
Evan Jenkins
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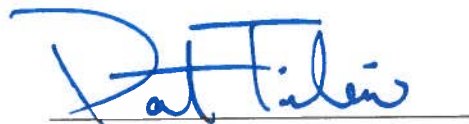
Curt Clawson
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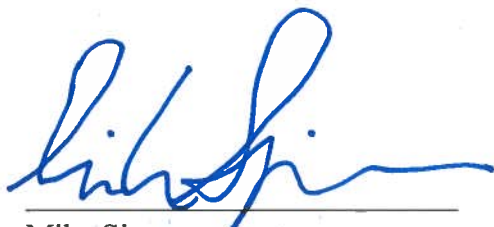
Steve Stivers
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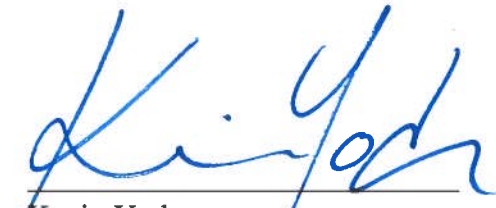
Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
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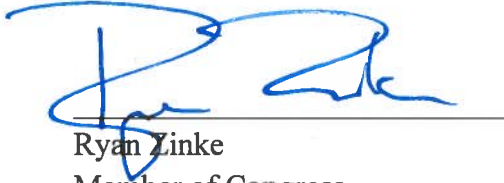
Kevin Yoder
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Bill Johnson
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Tom Emmer
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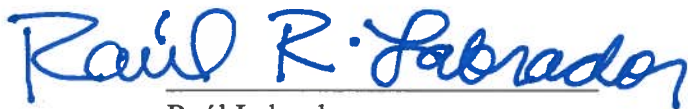
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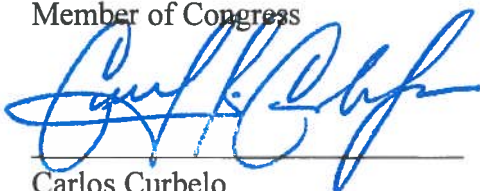
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Carlos Curbelo
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Trent Franks
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Barbara Comstock
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Ted Deutch
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
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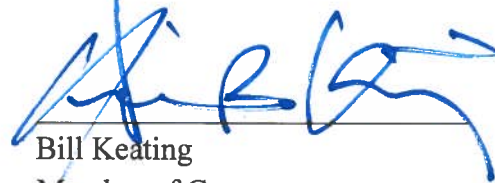
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Louis Gohmert
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Robert Hurt
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Tom Cole
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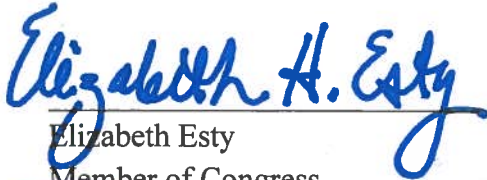
Bennie G. Thompson
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Adrian Smith
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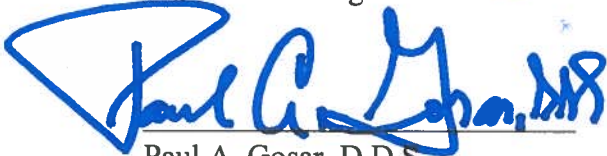
Rod Blum
Member of Congress



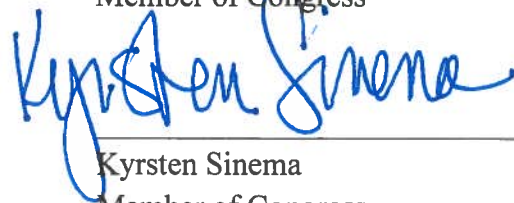
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Lloyd Doggett
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Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
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Kyrsten Sinema
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Martha McSally

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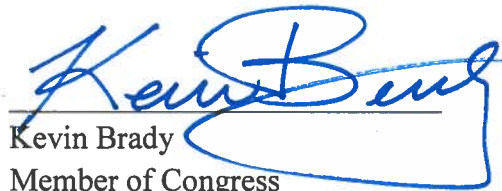
Chris Smith

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Dan Newhouse

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Kevin Brady

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Richard Hudson

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