



An Encouraging Truth About the House FAA Bill

It's fine for a newspaper to take a position, but solid editorials are based on solid facts. Unfortunately, your recent take on House legislation that did not include a provision to hand over our airspace to the airlines ([There's one depressing thing about the FAA reauthorization bill, May 3](#)) settled for sensationalism over substance, and overlooked some facts.

The reason for such widespread opposition is simple: it would replace congressional oversight of the nation's aviation system with a board, effectively dominated by the airlines, and unaccountable to Congress. The group would have authority to target resources toward the large airline hubs and make self-serving decisions. And your suggestion that the legislation would stifle general aviation and "make more room" at airports for the airlines is way off base. General aviation makes up less than 1 percent of traffic at Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport and O'Hare International Airport in Chicago and less than 2 percent at LaGuardia Airport in New York.

With regard to your characterization of those opposing so-called air traffic control (ATC) "privatization:" it may be politically convenient to single out private pilots and businesses opposing this concept, but the proposal was a thinly disguised power grab by the airlines – and that is why it failed.

The truth is, this ATC-giveaway alarmed lawmakers from both parties, mayors in every state, think tanks on the left and right, consumer and passenger groups, more than 200 aviation organizations, the majority of the American public and independent government watchdogs, like the Congressional Budget Office, the Congressional Research Service and the Government Accountability Office.

Fortunately, a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives understood the concerns raised by so many voices. Lawmakers passed an FAA reauthorization bill recognizing that America has the world's largest, safest, most diverse and most efficient aviation system, and that an ATC giveaway is not the same thing as meaningful, continued modernization.

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