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www.aopa.org

January 12, 2024

Senator Maria Cantwell
Chairwoman
Senate Commerce, Science, and
Transportation Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Ted Cruz
Ranking Member
Senate Commerce, Science, and
Transportation Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Tammy Duckworth
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Aviation Safety,
Operations, and Innovation
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation Safety,
Operations, and Innovation
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Cantwell, Cruz, Duckworth, and Moran:

On behalf of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), which represents hundreds of thousands of members who collectively operate over 85% of general aviation (GA) aircraft in the United States, we strongly urge the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee to act on its FAA Reauthorization bill.

We applaud the Committee's leadership and the full Senate's October action in moving the confirmation and appointment of Michael Whitaker as FAA Administrator. He and the agency, through an FAA Reauthorization, now need the tools and support to further address several issues impacting pilots that include but are not limited to safety, technology, innovation, and airports.

As you know, an FAA Reauthorization is important to the entire aviation industry including the general aviation industry that contributes an estimated \$247 billion in economic output and supports 1.2 million jobs in the United States.

Through the network of more than 5,000 public-use airports across the country, which is 10 times the amount served by commercial airlines, as well as over 14,700 privately owned landing facilities nationwide, general aviation is an integral part of the transportation system that supports thousands of communities across country.

General aviation also provides valuable and life-saving benefits including disaster relief, law enforcement, search and rescue, agricultural support, and humanitarian missions.

Most that aspire to become aviators actually get their start in general aviation, and moving an FAA Reauthorization bill will help ensure that this pipeline remains open to all.

AOPA looks forward to working with you and the Committee to move the FAA Reauthorization bill promptly and avoid any additional short-term FAA extensions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Baker', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Baker
President and CEO
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

cc: Members, United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation
The Honorable Michael Whitaker, FAA Administrator