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United States Capitol
East Capitol St NE & First St SE
Washington, DC 20004

To the Honorable Senator Heitkamp, the Honorable Senator Hoeven, and the Honorable Representative Cramer:

On behalf of the membership of the North Dakota Aviation Council, I am sending this letter to request that you oppose any attempt by Congress to privatize our nation's air traffic control (ATC) system and fund it with user fees.

Legislation will be considered this year that could fundamentally change how our air traffic control system is managed and funded.

Past proposals have called for turning over funding and governance authority to a self-interested board dominated by the airlines with the power to determine when companies using business aviation can fly, how much it will cost to do so, and what type of payment – including user fees – will be demanded of stakeholders.

We have already seen the negative effects from similarly privatized systems in several foreign countries. These entities receive funding through user fees, which in turn require a new bureaucracy of billing agents, collectors and auditors that impose a huge administrative burden on those required to pay the fees. Simply put, our country does not need a cumbersome, "Sky-R-S"-style bureaucracy to collect these onerous fees. General aviation in the U.S. has always contributed to the aviation system through fuel taxes that are easily collected and efficiently administered, and should continue to do so.

Furthermore, the skies over the U.S. are a national asset, and the general aviation community is committed to ensuring that the future funding and subsequent design of the national air transportation system will benefit all Americans.

Only 500 or so cities in the United States that have scheduled airline service, but there are over 5,000 small towns in the U.S. with airports that provide access to general aviation, including business aviation.

Access to airports, and to the nation's airspace, creates jobs, generates economic activity, and helps make America's aviation system work for all Americans. In fact, general aviation supports more than a million jobs and generates more than \$200 billion in economic activity each year.

Congressional oversight of the nation's aviation system ensures that the public interest – including the people and companies that rely on aviation in small towns and communities – is served. Privatizing our air traffic control system could jeopardize these jobs and economic activity by threatening general aviation access to airports and airspace.

The general aviation stakeholders from all across the state of North Dakota ask you to protect the public interest by saying no to privatizing our air traffic control system and funding it with user fees.

Unencumbered access to our nation's airports and airspace directly contributes to job creation and robust economic activity, and helps make America's aviation system work for all Americans. In fact, general aviation supports more than a million jobs and generates more than \$200 billion in economic activity each year. According to the 2015 North Dakota Statewide Aviation Economic Impact Study, general aviation airports in our state support more than \$121 million in total economic output, 926 jobs, and a payroll of more than \$41 million.

The North Dakota Aviation Council respectfully asks that you act on behalf of this vital public interest by opposing user fees and the privatization our air traffic control system.

Sincerely,

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