



2007 Legislative Priorities

Issue Brief:

Federal Aviation Reauthorization



Talking Points:

- In September 2007, the Vision 100 Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (PL 108-176), authorizing funding for federal aviation programs, will expire.
- NARC is advocating for aviation programs that support the country's regional transportation needs. Metropolitan and rural regions, both large and small, should benefit from aviation programs that not only improve mobility, but also enhance the movement of goods and services and strengthen regional economies.

Pending Legislation:

- S 1300 — to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration through fiscal 2011 — sponsored by Senators Rockefeller (D-WV), Inouye (D-HI), Stevens (R-AK) and Lott (R-MS).
- HR 1356 — to authorize appropriations for the Federal Aviation Administration for fiscal years 2008 through 2010, to improve aviation safety and capacity, to provide stable, cost-based funding for the national aviation system, and for other purposes — sponsored by Representatives Oberstar (D-MN), Costello (D-IL), Mica (R-FL) and Petri (R-WI).

NARC Recommendations:

- Provide adequate funds to maintain and strengthen the AIP Program so that airports can build their capacity to meet the demands of future growth.
- Retain funding levels for the EAS Program to ensure that no service is discontinued.
- Ensure that maximizing aviation security does not take funding away from other essential programs such as the AIP Program and the EAS Program.
- Ensure implementation of adequate safety and security measures where risks exist – primarily at commercial and general aviation airports – without diversion of funding from other programs, particularly the AIP Program.

Background:

- There are two aviation programs that greatly impact regional travel and mobility – The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and the Essential Air Service Program (EAS).
- The AIP program provides grant funding to public agencies for the planning and development of public-use airports. Projects eligible for funding include runways, terminals and other enhancements designed to improve airport safety, capacity, security and environmental impacts. The AIP program is funded through the Aviation Trust Fund. Vision 100 authorized funding from this program at \$3.4 billion in FY 04 increasing to \$3.7 billion in FY 07.
- The EAS Program, which was developed in response to airline deregulation in 1978, guarantees small communities are served by certified air carriers and maintain a minimal level of service. Funding for this program subsidizes commuter airlines to serve approximately 140 rural communities across the country that otherwise would not receive any scheduled air service. Vision 100 authorized this program at a minimum of \$50 million. The program currently receives \$110 million.