

National Association of Regional Councils



2006 NARC Policy Brief

NARC policies are developed yearly from consultations with and information provided by the association's working groups, committees and its membership. The policies provide a context for NARC's national agenda on significant national and legislative issues. Each policy brief includes a rationale for NARC's position on topics relevant and important to America's regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations, metro and rural, large and small.

Aviation

Issue: Aviation

Background: Maintaining a well balanced and integrated aviation transportation system is one component of national competitiveness, easing congestion in our urban areas, and connecting our rural ones. Key to this is a well funded system of programs – Essential Air Service, Airport Improvement Program, Security Grants— to serve our needs and fund our airports.

NARC will continue to work on aviation as a key component of our multi-modal transportation strategy and ensure the following programs are well funded and meet our regional needs:

- The Airport Improvement Program (AIP) provides around \$3.6 billion to fund improvements to commercial airport facilities. These grants are a big part of what makes our modern air carrier system work. AIP should be better funded—or at least maintained—to ensure that our citizens will continue to enjoy safe, inexpensive, and speedy mobility.
- The Essential Air Service (EAS) program provides over \$110 million annually to subsidize scheduled commercial service to airports in rural and small communities that would otherwise not receive service. This program provides these communities with a crucial link to the nation and the world, allowing them to attract new residents and grow their economies.
- Aviation Security Grants is an important part of our national security system. NARC encourages the development of new technologies and processes that enhance aviation security. However, NARC cautions against reducing spending in other important areas to fund aviation security.

Policy Recommendations:

- NARC supports a strong regional airline system to bring mobility to small and medium-sized communities, and provide system redundancy.
- Support airport construction and expansion projects to relieve congestion in the skies, improve safety, and lower system cost.

Legislative Actions:

- Monitor and support the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (due in 2006).

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