



April 15, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders McConnell, McCarthy and Schumer:

The United States business and general aviation industry, which includes all operations other than scheduled airline flights and the military, supports 1.2 million jobs and \$247 billion in economic impact. Across the country, thousands of small and mid-size businesses that generate \$77 billion in labor income are facing unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and require additional relief.

On behalf of the entire industry, we applaud your efforts to provide near and mid-term relief for air carriers and small businesses under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). In addition to loans and grants for air carriers, the CARES Act suspended certain federal excise taxes for commercial air transportation until January 1, 2021; however, it did not suspend non-commercial aviation fuel taxes.

While this excise tax suspension provides longer-term relief to commercial air carriers, most general aviation operations are non-commercial, and thus not eligible for this tax relief that will help incentivize aviation activity as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. As Congress considers a fourth relief package, we respectfully request that aviation fuel taxes paid by non-commercial operators also be suspended. The specific taxes include the 21.9 cents per gallon tax on jet fuel, 19.4 cents per gallon tax on aviation gasoline, and 14.1 cents per gallon surtax on qualified fractional aircraft operations.

With general aviation operations sharply decreasing by nearly 60-percent due to the COVID-19 pandemic, relief from the non-commercial fuel taxes would incentivize operators to preserve jobs and resume flying once we begin to emerge from this crisis. This relief would also help small community general aviation airports, which are reporting that aircraft operations and fuel sales are down by more than 50-percent.

In addition to connecting small communities without airline service, general aviation has a proven track record of providing humanitarian assistance. Recently, our industry facilitated the delivery of one million protective face masks and more than half a million COVID-19 test kits from China. Other operators are using aircraft to transport medical supplies around New York and assist with the logistics of moving medical equipment around the world.

In making this request, we recognize the COVID-19 pandemic has led to challenges for the Airport & Airway Trust Fund (AATF). However, we believe the suspension of non-commercial aviation fuel taxes would provide our industry with similar relief to what has been offered to commercial operators. Also, temporary relief from

the fuel taxes will serve as a catalyst to help small general aviation businesses recover once the immediate crisis begins to recede. In the long-run, this will benefit the aviation system, the AATF, and our entire economy.

For our industry to recover from this crisis, we require additional relief that will encourage businesses to return to general aviation in the coming months. The suspension of the non-commercial fuel taxes will help reduce operating costs, provide longer-term relief, and is consistent with the policy for commercial aviation. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
Experimental Aircraft Association
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
Helicopter Association International
National Air Transportation Association
National Business Aviation Association