July 19, 2019

The Honorable Thomas Massie  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Thomas Massie and Representative Earl Blumenauer:

On behalf of the organizations listed below, the Beyond the Runway Coalition would like to express its strong support for your bill, H.R. 3791, the Investing in America: Rebuilding America’s Airport Infrastructure Act. This important bill would eliminate the federally imposed cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) and provide airports with the ability to locally determine their own PFC rates based on their unique infrastructure needs.

America’s airports are powerful economic engines in their communities, generating more than $1.4 trillion in annual economic output and supporting over 11.5 million jobs. With passenger and cargo growth on the rise, action to address America’s aging aviation infrastructure is long overdue. Airports need to be able to make new investments to meet their capacity demands of today and into the future. The industries, businesses, and infrastructure groups we represent rely heavily on aviation infrastructure to support economic growth. New infrastructure investments provide employment opportunities both for the planning and construction of projects and by establishing better transportation connections to customers here and abroad.

This renewed and bipartisan effort to improve airport infrastructure comes at a critical time – with passenger enplanements at a record high and federal infrastructure investments stagnant. According to the most recent infrastructure needs survey conducted by Airports Council International – North America, airports of all sizes face over $128 billion in infrastructure improvements over the next five years. All airports would benefit from having the ability to generate more local revenue for runways, taxiways, terminals, gates, and other projects that would improve the passenger experience.

Congress last adjusted the PFC cap to $4.50 in 2000, but with inflation and rising construction costs the purchasing power of the PFC has significantly eroded to barely $2.25. As a result, many airports have reached their debt capacity and either cannot finance new projects or have had to stretch their projects over a longer timeframe, increasing the costs and delaying the benefits for passengers.

The great news is that we can rebuild America’s airports without raising taxes or increasing deficit spending simply by modernizing the PFC. Eliminating the anti-competitive federal cap on PFCs would
allow airports across the country to become more financially self-sufficient. It is important to note that PFCs are not taxes, but rather local user fees determined locally and used locally to improve the passenger experience and spur airline competition. Not one dollar of PFC revenue flows to the federal treasury, and instead PFC revenue goes directly to fund local airport projects approved by the FAA with input from airlines and local communities.

We thank you for your attention to the infrastructure needs of our nation’s airports by introducing H.R. 3791, and we look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,