

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2020

The Honorable Joel Szabat  
Acting Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC, 20590

Mr. Arjun Garg  
Chief Counsel  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC, 20591

*Submitted via email to: [7-awa-slotadmin@faa.gov](mailto:7-awa-slotadmin@faa.gov)*

RE: FAA-2020-0862-0015

Dear Acting Under Secretary Szabat and Mr. Garg:

We write to urge the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to extend the COVID-19 related policy that prioritizes flights canceled at IATA Level 2 airports in the U.S. for purposes of establishing a carrier's operational baseline in the next IATA season through the end of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) 2020/2021 winter season.

A sustainable aviation recovery – and the economic benefits that aviation brings to communities and workers across the U.S. – depends on airlines being able to flexibly match supply and demand. We see no reason to treat Level 2 and Level 3 airports separately – the COVID pandemic has impacted the aviation industry uniformly – and ask that FAA treat Level 2 and Level 3 airports the same.

Under the FAA's current proposal, the carriers operating at vitally important hubs such as Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, would be forced to make drastic schedule adjustments for reasons unrelated to business practices, safety, or efficiency. In addition, we are particularly concerned that carbon emissions from aviation would significantly increase as carriers will be forced to operate "ghost flights" for the sole purpose of retaining schedules.

We are also concerned that the FAA's proposal to treat Level 2 and Level 3 airports differently would functionally artificially pick economic winners and losers by distorting normal market function and incentives.

The U.S. would stand alone if it continues with this policy proposal, subjecting U.S. jobs and travelers to even greater risk and uncertainty.

The coronavirus pandemic has devastated air travel demand – a situation that will likely persist until the public health concerns (and their attendant travel restrictions) are behind us. We urge the FAA to simply continue its equal treatment of congested airports in the U.S. until we are on the road to recovery.

Thank you,



Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

/s/

Dick Durbin  
United States Senator

/s/

Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress

/s/

Mike Bost  
Member of Congress

/s/

Bill Foster  
Member of Congress

/s/

Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress

/s/

Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress

/s/

Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress

/s/

Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

/s/

Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

/s/

Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress

/s/

John Shimkus  
Member of Congress

/s/

Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress

/s/

Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress

/s/

Bradley S. Schneider  
Member of Congress

/s/

Jan Schakowsky

Member of Congress