

December 8, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA), the voice of aviation business, is the public policy group representing the interests of aviation businesses before Congress, federal agencies and state governments. NATA's 2,000 member companies own, operate and service aircraft. These companies provide for the needs of the traveling public by offering services and products to aircraft operators and others such as fuel sales, aircraft maintenance, parts sales, storage, rental, airline servicing, flight training, Part 135 on-demand air charter, fractional aircraft program management and scheduled commuter operations in smaller aircraft. NATA members are a vital link in the aviation industry providing services to the general public, airlines, general aviation and the military.

A significant portion of our membership includes companies that provide services to scheduled air carriers as their primary business. These companies comprise NATA's Airline Services Council (ASC). ASC member companies provide a wide range of services including aircraft fueling, ground handling, baggage service, catering, cleaning and security. Today, the ASC represents local, regional, state and international aviation service providers that account for approximately \$5 billion in combined revenue, employ over 90,000 employees, and provide services at 425 airports in 67 countries. Airline services companies are a vital link in our nation's air transportation system.

I wish to commend the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for holding the Diversion Forum to address issues that were highlighted during the early winter snowstorm this year so that future diversion events do not place an undue burden on the national airspace system. NATA staff attended the forum in the interest of furthering preparedness for weather and other emergency situations that require the diversion of aircraft. NATA and the ASC believe that preparation and communication are key elements in handling aircraft diversions.

NATA and the ASC would like to suggest that one component of preparation that is needed to effectively handle diversion events is an airport diversion plan. Such a plan would need to be completed by any Part 139 certificated airport and accepted by the FAA. Such a plan should be developed in coordination with airport ground service and fuel providers to ensure that needed equipment and manpower could be made available during a diversion event. The diversion plan would also cover airport specific operating plans that take into account security requirements and available space for additional passengers.

Secretary LaHood  
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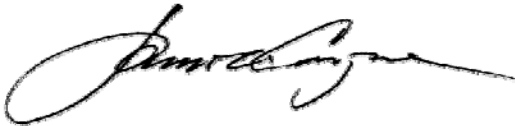
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Ground service companies provide a critical role in an airports ability to properly manage a diversion event. NATA and its ASC members respectfully request to be a part of the process as the FAA works toward finalizing the best way to ensure that the airline industry works together in sharing information to better manage weather-related diversion in the future. In addition, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the value of an airport diversion plan with you and your staff. We believe that with proper preparation future diversions, like the one that occurred in October of this year, these diversions can be handled more effectively and efficiently.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

With best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James K. Coyne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James K. Coyne  
President