



## **For Immediate Release**

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### **FAA Reauthorization Bill Stumbles Again – A GAAC Perspective**

WASHINGTON, DC – Even though the U.S. House of Representatives cancelled its scheduled recess this week, it is evident that the long-stalled Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill will not be completed by the expiration of the 20<sup>th</sup> short-term extension (July 22, 2011). On July 15, 2011, House Transportation and Infrastructure chairman John Mica (R-FL) and House Ways and Means chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) introduced H.R. 2553, a record-busting 21<sup>st</sup> extension that would run until September 16, 2011. This is not good news for the industry as a whole, but certainly not for general aviation airports.

On May 25, 2011, however, the General Aviation Airport Coalition (GAAC) initiated a robust advocacy campaign urging House and Senate leaders to join forces and deliver a complete reauthorization bill to provide the greatest user benefits possible to general aviation airports.

General Aviation (GA) airports, struggling to remain operational in a much-troubled economic climate, have experienced sharp decreases in local fiscal support. Many struggle to simply raise the five-percent local matching funds required to take part in the FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP) program. And now, just when money is the tightest in decades, the House voted to increase the local cost share to 10 percent, making GA airport participation in AIP programs even less likely. GAAC supports the Senate-passed language to maintain the current AIP 95/5 cost-share, as well as the \$8.1 billion in AIP funding included in Senate-passed bill (S. 223).

The FAA's view of Through-the-Fence (TTF) agreements – currently under agency review – represents another significant hurdle to GA airports. GAAC believes a general aviation airport should not be held in violation of federal grant assurances – FAA's proposal – solely due to a pre-existing TTF agreement. To GAAC, inclusion of Section 137 of the House-passed language is essential to guarantee that airports with existing TTF agreements do not lose AIP funds to which they would normally be entitled.

Finally, given GA airports' unique role in the aviation industry, GAAC believes it is imperative that GA airports and the coalition be more closely involved in the development of the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). GAAC supports language in the House- and Senate-passed reauthorization bills that requires GA participation in development of the NextGen plan. GAAC is positioning itself to play a significant role in this process.

Above all, GAAC believes, unlike the Senate, that any new reauthorization legislation should last at least four years.

The General Aviation Airport Coalition preserves and promotes general aviation airports across the United States, with a unifying voice to support appropriate legislation and policies. GAAC also helps airports clearly communicate their economic value to all constituents, and provides a forum for GA airport stakeholders to share best practices and materials to help in the day-to-day operations and management of GA airports. For more information, visit [gaairportcoalition.org](http://gaairportcoalition.org).