

T&I Member Day Testimony – Earl L. ‘Buddy’ Carter

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member, thank you for the opportunity to testify in front of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee for Members’ Day. Mr. Chairman, like many of the members here, I believe that it is pertinent to raise infrastructure priorities that will address many of the problems facing our nation. For that reason, I would like to submit the following testimony on issues in your jurisdiction.

First, I’d like to mention the importance of updating the passenger facility charge which is important for many airports across the country. In my district alone, I have a number of airports that have stressed how critical it is that they be provided additional flexibility under the passenger facility charge to make improvements. Mr. Chairman, while the United States once lead in aviation and the structures to make it commercially viable, we are now being left behind as those airports age. By addressing the caps for the passenger facility charge, we can give airports in nearly every congressional district the opportunity to modernize and meet their customers’ needs. One thing to remember is those charges are locally spent and locally imposed.

Second, it would be beneficial to augment the Airport Improvement Program for small, medium, and non-hub airports. This program is essential in providing

grants for the planning and development of commercial airports. Smaller airports are often an economic engine for communities that don't have access to large, commercial airports and they provide an important link. As we see more traffic moving to a hub and spoke model, these smaller and non-hub airports are critical to ensuring that people can continue to access these communities they serve.

Finally, infrastructure needs include airports, but they also go so much further. I'm honored to represent two commercial ports, Savannah and Brunswick, which are growing at an incredible speed. Much of that is due to great management, local investment, and a continued working model of a public-private partnership with the federal government. As we continue to look towards the nation's infrastructure needs, I believe it is pertinent to look at these projects delivering a high benefit-to-cost ratio and to examine how those successes can be utilized in the larger scheme of infrastructure funding.

I know this committee will work diligently to address the nation's infrastructure needs and I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.