May 10, 2021

Chairman Tom Carper
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairman Peter DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Shelley Moore Capito
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
456 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Ranking Member Sam Graves
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2164 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Carper and DeFazio and Ranking Members Capito and Graves:

We write today to express our strong support for the inclusion of a new grant program for planning and capital costs to support Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) transportation in upcoming infrastructure legislation. AAM uses electric aircraft and is poised to revolutionize the way in which people move within and between cities, suburban, and rural areas. Additionally, AAM provides environmentally conscious alternatives to current transportation options. It is critical that states and local governments have the flexibility and financial support to study and plan for how AAM can meet their distinct planning and community requirements and make targeted capital investments.

More than 250 designers around the world are exploring the potential for the next generation of aircraft, including hybrid-electric and all-electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft, that will make AAM a reality. These aircraft utilize recent advances in powertrain technology, resulting in products that emit less noise and reduce emissions. Many aircraft are in active certification programs with the FAA, with commercial operations expected to commence within the next five years. A recent study from the Aerospace Industries Association and Deloitte projects that by 2035 AAM could be a $115 billion annual market and create at least 280,000 jobs.

Operators who can meet the safety and operational standards of today's regulatory framework and use existing aviation infrastructure such as heliports and runways will be able to take off in the coming years. In some cases, pathfinder projects can provide vital multimodal linkages between a city's airport and its local transit systems. As public demand for quieter, emissions-free flight grows, operations will expand beyond existing aviation infrastructure and investments in new takeoff and landing locations closer to work and residential centers will be needed. Interested communities will see a multitude of benefits from incorporating AAM into their transportation planning.

This expanded mode of local and regional transportation can create new economic and workforce development opportunities for communities. Each city or county is likely to have subtle but important differences based on local characteristics. To assist cities and counties in their planning and necessary capital investments for this innovative technology, a federal grant program is needed to ensure that these new options are fully considered alongside traditional infrastructure options.

The United States is currently the global leader in the development of AAM technology including aviation autonomy and critical propulsion technology, but that leadership is highly contested. Europe and China are hard at work developing these aircraft as well as the accompanying support systems and infrastructure. This AAM grant program will assist cities, counties, metropolitan planning organizations, states, and others in accelerating this critical work, allowing the U.S. to maintain our global leadership in an exciting new aviation market, while creating thousands of new green American jobs.

Sincerely,

Aeronautical Repair Station Association

Aerospace Industries Association

Aircraft Electronics Association

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics

Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International

Community Air Mobility Initiative

General Aviation Manufacturers Association

Helicopter Association International

National Air Transportation Association

National Association of Counties

National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of State Aviation Officials

National Business Aviation Association

Vertical Flight Society

cc: Senator Maria Cantwell, Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Senator Roger Wicker, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation