

June 8, 2017

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Transportation  
HUD & Related Agencies Appropriations  
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Price  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Transportation  
HUD & Related Agencies Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Price:

On behalf of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, Experimental Aircraft Association, General Aviation Manufacturers Association, Helicopter Association International, National Agricultural Aviation Association, National Air Transportation Association, and National Association of State Aviation Officials, we write to thank you for your past support of the collaborative government and industry initiative to identify and deploy a safe unleaded replacement for the current 100 octane low lead fuel used in piston engine aircraft. As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations legislation, we respectfully request that you provide \$7,000,000 in funding for the FAA's NextGen – Alternative Fuels for General Aviation (GA) program.

The purpose of this endeavor is to address the complex transition of the existing GA piston fleet, comprised of more than 200,000 aircraft, to a replacement unleaded fuel. The support of your Subcommittee to this effort in previous years has been used to further the research necessary to launch and conduct the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative (PAFI), a robust program of testing and evaluation to identify suitable unleaded fuel replacements with the least impact on the existing fleet of GA aircraft. This continuing investment in the PAFI program is essential to ensuring that a transition to an unleaded replacement fuel effectively balances environmental improvement with aviation safety, technical challenges, and economic impact to the U.S. general aviation transportation system.

To date, the FAA has reviewed seventeen initial candidate fuels and selected four for initial testing. After rigorous laboratory testing in this phase, two fuels were selected for engine and aircraft testing. These fuels continue to be tested and evaluated for operability, performance, detonation, and for warm and cold weather operation in addition to materials compatibility, emissions, and toxicology.

FY18 funding will be the final installment for the PAFI test program and with these funds the FAA will build upon its earlier testing with full scale engine and flight tests, cooperative agreements and independent laboratory testing, and further engineering, technical, and management support. With the PAFI program and beyond, industry and FAA remain dedicated to finding a fuel replacement that will be compatible for the GA fleet.

Funding of \$7,000,000 will ensure that the PAFI program will be able to provide sound technical data to the FAA. This data will provide a basis for the agency safety determination and ability to provide FAA approvals and authorizations necessary to enable piston aircraft to operate on an unleaded fuel. While the funding amount is larger than the President's FY18 budget request, it is consistent with the levels provided by Congress in FY17 and would ensure the program can conduct the ongoing research and testing needed to work towards identifying and facilitating a new, unleaded aviation fuel with minimum impact on the fleet of 200,000 piston aircraft in the U.S.

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, which represent operators that utilize piston aircraft as well as those that manufacture, service, and maintain them, we thank you for your time, consideration, and past support which is critical to the safety and economic sustainability of the general aviation community.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Baker  
President and CEO  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association  
AOPA



Jack Pelton  
CEO and Chairman of the Board  
Experimental Aircraft Association  
EAA



Peter J. Bunce  
President and CEO  
General Aviation Manufacturers Association  
GAMA



Matthew S. Zuccaro  
President and CEO  
Helicopter Association International  
HAI



Andrew D. Moore  
Executive Director  
National Agricultural Aviation  
Association  
NAAA



Martin Hiller  
President  
National Air Transportation Association  
NATA



Mark Kimberling  
President and CEO  
National Association of State Aviation Officials  
NASAO