

## (September 20, 2007) Lipinski Helps Pass Landmark Legislation to Improve American Aviation

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Bill Enhances Safety, Airline Passenger Rights, and Environment

WASHINGTON, DC - Today, Congressman Dan Lipinski, helped pass H.R. 2881, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007, comprehensive legislation governing the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and other aspects of our national aviation system. The bill was approved by the full House of Representatives this afternoon by a vote of 267 to 151.

Representative Lipinski serves on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure where he sits on the Subcommittee on Aviation, the legislative panel responsible for drafting the FAA reauthorization.

"This bill contains a number of critical provisions that will improve our nation's transportation system while modernizing and improving our air traffic control capabilities," explained Lipinski. "I am proud to have helped craft this legislation and pleased that the House of Representatives has passed this reauthorization by a wide bipartisan majority."

The reauthorization contains historic funding levels for FAA capital programs, including:

- \$15.8 billion for the Airport Improvement Program - over \$4 billion more than the Administration's proposal;
- \$13 billion for FAA Facilities & Equipment - over \$1 billion more than the Administration's proposal;
- \$37.2 billion for FAA Operations.

"Importantly for our region, this FAA reauthorization provides necessary funding to make our runways safer," said Rep. Lipinski. "This issue is important to the many people in Chicagoland who still clearly remember the tragic accident in 2005 when an aircraft skidded off the runway at Midway Airport and into a passing car, killing a young boy. To address some of the concerns raised by this type of accident, this legislation provides over \$100 million for runway safety improvements that will help protect flight crews and aircraft passengers, as well as the people who live and work alongside our nation's airports."

This reauthorization also contains two provisions authored by Rep. Lipinski aimed at developing alternative aviation fuels. The first authorizes \$750,000 for the development, testing, and approval of an alternative to the leaded aviation gasoline currently used by piston engine aircraft. The second provision establishes a new FAA Air Transportation Center of Excellence focused on researching alternative jet fuels to help reduce global warming and increase American energy independence.

"While jet emissions still constitute only 3% of global emissions, that share is growing rapidly as the number of flights worldwide continues to increase," said Rep. Lipinski. "We must act now to reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses and lead being released into our environment."

The FAA reauthorization also contains provisions aimed at protecting passengers. Airlines and airports will be required to develop contingency plans to take care of passengers affected by long delays, including providing food, water and medical care.

"From my frequent flights between Chicago and Washington, D.C., I know all too well the frustration and powerlessness felt by passengers affected by delayed and canceled flights and lost luggage," said Rep. Lipinski. "The passenger protections in this reauthorization are welcome relief to all airline travelers."

The Senate must now pass their version of the FAA Reauthorization legislation before it can be reconciled with H.R. 2881 and sent to the President to be signed into law.