

Science/Technology, Research and Development, and Special Access Programs. His Division is responsible for developing and executing strategies to best advocate for Air Force programs, and prepares AF senior leadership for testimony before House and Senate Armed Services Committees and Select Committees on Intelligence.

The colonel entered the Air Force in 1981 after receiving his commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy. He commanded the 23d Fighter Group "Flying Tigers" and the 494th Fighter Squadron, which, under his leadership, received the U.S. Air Forces in Europe Commander's Trophy as the top fighter squadron in the command. He is a command fighter pilot with approximately 4,000 flying hours and has flown combat missions over Iraq, Serbia, and Afghanistan.

I join my colleagues in expressing our sincere appreciation to Colonel Warren Henderson for his outstanding service to both the United States Air Force and our Legislative Branch. We wish him the best as he transitions into a new career. Colonel Henderson is a true professional and a credit to himself and the United States Air Force.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED
AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
ACT, 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 26, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2643) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior, environment, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes:

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the Brown-Waite Amendment, which would cut funding for the National Endowment for the Arts by \$32 million dollars, eliminating the much-needed funding increase for the NEA.

Since 1996, Congress has forced the NEA to meet the ever growing demands of our communities on a shoestring budget. Despite gross underfunding, the NEA has continued to promote arts and culture across the country.

With much-needed incremental increases since 2001, the NEA has developed widely-popular programs, including the Big Read and Shakespeare in American Communities, to encourage Americans to participate in cultural experiences.

In 2006, the NEA awarded 1,744 grants in 435 congressional districts—that's every single Congressional district in the nation.

In addition, because of the NEA's partnership with state and local art agencies, NEA grants are typically leveraged 7 to 1 for every dollar of federal investment.

Mr. Chairman, the cost of cutting funding to the NEA is so much more than the savings. I encourage my colleagues to support the NEA and oppose the Brown-Waite amendment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I am listed as voting "nay" during rollcall vote number 529 on H.R. 2764, the "Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2008" when it was before the House of Representatives on Thursday, June 21, 2007. This is an error. I support the Shays of Connecticut Amendment on the Iraq Study Group and want it noted that had my intention been properly expressed I would be recorded as having voted "aye."

INTRODUCING H.R. 2881, THE FAA
REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce H.R. 2881, the "FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007", a bill that provides historic funding levels for the Federal Aviation Administration's ("FAA") capital Programs. Between fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2011, the bill provides \$15.8 billion for the Airport Improvement Program ("AIP"), and nearly \$13 billion for FAA Facilities & Equipment ("F&E"). These robust funding levels will enable the FAA to modernize our air traffic control ("ATC") system and make capacity enhancing improvements at our nation's airports. In addition, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 also provides \$37.2 billion—one-half billion more than the FAA's recommendation—for FAA Operations over the next four years.

ATC MODERNIZATION

Modernizing our air transportation system is a national priority. The FAA forecasts that airlines are expected to carry more than one billion passengers by 2015, increasing from approximately 740 million in 2006. The Department of Transportation ("DOT") predicts up to a tripling of passengers, operations and cargo by 2025. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 applies a four-part approach to ATC modernization and the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen), including more funding, authority, accountability, and oversight.

The historic funding levels authorized for the FAA's F&E account will: accelerate the implementation of NextGen; enable FAA to replace and repair existing facilities and equipment; and provide for the development and implementation of high-priority safety-related systems.

To increase the authority and visibility of the Joint Planning and Development Office ("JPDO"), which provides the plan for NextGen, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 elevates the Director of the JPDO to the status of Associate Administrator for NextGen within the FAA. It also mandates that the JPDO develop a work plan that details, on a year-by-year basis, specific NextGen-related deliverables for the FAA and its partner agencies, and requires the Secretary of Transpor-

tation to report on the plan's progress each year. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 contains provisions to hold the FAA's vendors accountable for providing safe, quality services to consumers and to protect the Government's interest in major NextGen-related acquisitions.

The FAA's ATC modernization program has historically experienced massive cost overruns and delays. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007 authorizes Government Accountability Office ("GAO"), Department of Transportation Inspector General ("DOT IG") and National Research Council audits and reports related to NextGen that will help Congress exercise its oversight responsibilities.

FINANCING

Due to the projected growth of Airport and Airway Trust Fund ("Trust Fund") revenue, I do not believe radical financing reform is necessary. I am recommending to the Committee on Ways and Means that the general aviation jet fuel tax rate be adjusted for inflation from 21.8 cents per gallon to 30.7 cents per gallon, and that the aviation gasoline tax rate be increased from 19.3 cents per gallon to 24.1 cents per gallon. I believe that the forecasted growth of Trust Fund revenues, coupled with additional revenue from the recommended general aviation fuel tax rate increases, will be sufficient to provide for the robust capital funding required to modernize the ATC system, as well as to stabilize and strengthen the Trust Fund.

AIRPORT FUNDING

Madam Speaker, in June, DOT reported that only 72.5 percent of domestic flights by the United States' 20 largest airlines arrived on-time in January, February, March, and April—the worst showing for those four months since DOT began reporting on-time performance in 1995. This is unacceptable. Robust investment in airport infrastructure is necessary to enhance capacity and combat delays.

According to the FAA, the majority of air traffic delays at the top 35 airports, which account for 73 percent of passenger enplanements, can be traced to inadequate throughput. To quote the FAA: "The construction of new runways and runway extensions are the most effective method of increasing throughput."

The FAA's 2007–2011 National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems ("NPIAS") states that during the next five years, there will be \$41.2 billion of AIP-eligible infrastructure development, an annual average of \$8.2 billion. This \$41.2 billion includes approximately \$18 billion in runway-related needs, including new runway, taxiway and apron construction. However, in March 2007, the FAA testified that the current NPIAS report may understate the true cost of needed capital investment, as sharp increases in construction costs occurring in the last half of 2006 were not fully reflected. The 2007–2011 Airports Council International—North America Capital Needs Survey estimates total airport capital needs—including the cost of non-AIP-eligible projects—to be about \$87.4 billion or \$17.5 billion per year from 2007 through 2011.

In March 2007, the American Association of Airport Executives testified that according to the January 1, 2007 Means Construction Cost Indexes, the average construction costs for 30 major U.S. cities have risen more than 24 percent in the past three years—at an average annual rate of more than 7.5 percent.