



# NORTH CAROLINA AIRPORTS ASSOCIATION

## 2018 NCAA Legislative Priorities

### Background

For over 100 years aviation has played a vital role in North Carolina's history. Today; from the military and agriculture to banking and pharmaceuticals virtually every segment of the economy is supported by air transportation and North Carolina's system of 72 public airports. Much like highways, rail and ports, aviation moves people and products in support of commerce and likewise must be maintained and developed to facilitate growth. Aviation currently supports over 123,000 jobs and impacts the state's economy by over \$31B; numbers that with the right investments are projected to grow significantly over the next decade.

Resources available to support economic growth have been shrinking while costs have escalated. In an effort to maintain the state's competitive position, the North Carolina General Assembly has recently committed to invest a larger portion of the more than \$790 million in taxes generated by aviation into its infrastructure and ensure the long-term viability of its' ten commercial service and 62 general aviation airports.

In addition to maintaining FY18 funding levels for the State Airport Aid Program used primarily to support the state's 62 general aviation facilities, commercial service airports are seeking continued assistance and support from the state to help meet a percentage of these needs that cannot be met by the FAA and local communities. Over the next two decades the state's ten commercial service airports have identified over \$8.1 billion in critical infrastructure needs. It is estimated that a sustained investment in commercial service airports of \$125-\$150 million annually will help maintain critical infrastructure and position airports to attract and retain jobs in increasing numbers. These funds will be used throughout the state to help both urban and rural areas move the state toward a more prosperous future. For maximum efficiency, the NCDOT should have the flexibility to assign a portion of these funds to critical projects as they reach the construction phase.

Airports must continue to find innovative ways to engage local communities and the private sector to finance these necessary projects as it is anticipated that over the next decade this funding gap will be in excess of \$4.8 billion. A large portion of this is attributed to signature projects at the state's 3 largest airports including a runway replacement at RDU, a new terminal at CLT and airfield reconstruction at GSO. Preservation and transformational projects from terminal upgrades to runway extensions are planned at all airports and are designed to attract and retain business in all of the state's 100 counties.

### Specific Recommendations

- Maintain FY 2018 funding levels for the State Aid to Airports Program.
- Increased aid to Commercial Service Airports to \$125 million to address infrastructure funding gaps and increase the state's airports' ability to compete for additional private sector jobs.