

Thank you, Chair DeFazio, for holding today's markup of this critical COVID-19 relief legislation.

As the nation continues to confront the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Americans need more relief.

Congress must apply lessons learned from the past year to provide comprehensive assistance.

The pandemic has devastated the U.S. aviation and aerospace industry and workforce, including in my home state of Washington.

As Chair of the Aviation Subcommittee, I am pleased that the legislation before the Committee today includes much-needed relief to support U.S. aviation workers and promote a strong economic recovery for U.S. aviation and aerospace.

Aerospace Suppliers Relief

In the Pacific Northwest, the aviation manufacturing supply chain drives the regional economy and helps the nation remain globally competitive.

Washington state is home to more than 136,000 highly skilled aerospace workers and over 1,400 aerospace-related companies, which are the backbone of the state's aerospace supply chain.

However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an estimated 100,000 aerospace manufacturing workers nationwide have lost their jobs and 220,000 additional jobs are at risk of furlough.

I am pleased that subtitle B of this package includes bipartisan legislation I introduced with my colleague, Rep. Ron Estes of Kansas, to help prevent aerospace manufacturing supply chain furloughs and recall workers furloughed due to the pandemic.

The *Aviation Manufacturing Jobs Protection Act of 2021* creates a temporary payroll support program to cover the costs of pay and benefits for aerospace manufacturing employees most at risk of being furloughed or to put back to work employees furloughed due to the pandemic.

Critically, the bill prohibits involuntary furloughs or reduction of pay rates and benefits during the funding period and prevents the use of relief funds for any other purposes.

This payroll support program will be a lifeline for aerospace suppliers like Safran Cabins in Bellingham and Hexcel Corporation in Burlington in my district, who have already announced hundreds of layoffs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Relief for Airports

The nation's airports are gateways to economic growth and the success of U.S. transportation. • However, the ongoing pandemic has depressed air travel.

During the week of January 24, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac) reported that TSA screened 69 percent fewer passengers than it did during the same week in 2020.

With travelers avoiding flying to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, airport concessionaires are hit particularly hard, including many minority and women-owned small businesses.

Section 7007 of this legislation would provide \$8 billion in critical relief for U.S. airports, including \$800 million for airport concessionaires.

Conclusion

The American people are sacrificing greatly to combat the pandemic.

Congress must provide support sufficient to the scope of the need, structured equitably and targeted to the nation's most urgent challenges during these difficult times.

Thanks again to Chair DeFazio and Committee staff for their hard work on this legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and provide real relief for the transportation sector and the American people.

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