

Honorable Don Young, Chair
Committee on Transportation
United States Congress
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Young,

RE: HR 3697 and S 1960

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

Congressman Mike Thompson and Senator Barbara Boxer have drafted legislation designed to assist small communities with airport improvement, expansion and safety development. It is my understanding that this important legislation is stalled in committee. This letter is requesting your assistance as chair of the Committee on Transportation to bring the bills forward.

Del Norte County, California, Curry County, Oregon and Josephine County, Oregon located in the Pacific Northwest and home of several Wild and Scenic Rivers of our nation jointly make this request. The Jack McNamara Airport is the transportation hub for the entire area, serving three counties, two states and several incorporated cities. This region is the home of Redwood National Park, the national forest and several state and county parks. In Del Norte County 83% of the lands are owned and managed by the state and federal governments. The region encompasses more than 4000 square mile and covers more than 122 miles of pristine coastline along with the wild Smith, Chetco, Rouge and Winchuck Rivers. The area has become a visitor destination known around the world for its untouched beauty and natural resources. Throughout the last several decades this northwest part of our nation has been struggling economically from the decline of the logging and fishing industries.

The transition from resource extraction to tourism has been difficult, but we are on the rebound and foresee a sustainable future. This future is dependent upon necessary improvements to basic transportation. The Jack McNamara Airport, Highways 101 and 199 are all necessary for the economic future of this region. With the assistance of **HR 3697** and **S1960** the communities of the region will continue to prosper.

Del Norte County, the owner and operator of Jack McNamara Field, has been diligent in improving the service and safety of the only commercial airport in the two state, three county region. The County is currently in the process of adopting a comprehensive airport master plan. The plan aggressively identifies airport improvement projects, in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration, which will ensure air travel and economic airport development in the region. Economic development and the airport have both been identified as the top priority from the independent Council of Economic Advisors, a local business and economic development group defining and identifying the economic direction of our region.

Due to extreme economic changes in Del Norte County and the region the match required for Airport improvement projects by the Federal Aviation Administration is daunting if not unattainable for our communities. If the match requirement is not lifted the future improvements and safety upgrades may be lost.

The proposed legislation would be the leg up that our region sorely needs to fulfil necessary economic development and transportation needs. Your assistance in this matter is required and greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your support and immediate action to place these measures on your next agenda. I look forward to hearing from you on this matter and anticipate positive results

Sincerely,