House Vote Temporarily Increases Debt Limit, But Twin Early December Deadlines Loom

Last week, the U.S. Senate passed legislation that would increase the Treasury's borrowing cap – the debt limit – to last at least into early December. The U.S. House of Representatives followed suit and voted Tuesday to do the same, beating an Oct. 18 deadline to raise or suspend the nation's borrowing limit. A default on our nation's debt could send shockwaves through the domestic and international economy, affecting interest rates and the stability of the U.S. dollar. The effects are mostly speculative. However, it is believed that without an increase in the debt limit, the federal government will be unable to issue new Treasury bonds, which is one way the government raises money to pay for its obligations. Once that happens, the government might be unable to contribute to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, which funds both CSRS and FERS annuities, or pay employees, leading to potential "save money" furloughs. Payments on Social Security, Medicare, military and domestic spending, interest on U.S. debt, and other obligations would be halted or scaled back. More broadly, the government might suspend certain benefits, economic support, and grant programs that are relied upon by millions of citizens and local communities. NATCA is glad that a default has been avoided for now. However, the debate will continue to play out when Congress faces the new deadline. Separately, Congress will also need to pass a new government funding bill by Dec. 3 or risk a shutdown. NATCA will continue to engage with our elected officials on these issues in the weeks ahead.

NEB Activities

The National Executive Board met on Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 12-13, in Boise, Idaho. We will report on the minutes of the meeting when they are available. Additionally, the NEB participated in a virtual Strategic Leadership Meeting

(SLM) with the Federal Aviation Administration on Oct. 13. Last week, Central Regional Vice President Aaron Merrick (pictured) was in Washington, D.C., as part of a recent effort by regional vice presidents to meet in small groups at the National Office each week to work on key issues. "It was a busy week as we were working on finalizing plans for the convention in December ([Dec. 9-10, Houston](#)) and the [announcement that needed to be put out](#)" Merrick said. "There is so much that goes on behind the scenes putting a major event like this together and pivoting on the fly to make it a 'business only' event."

Air Safety Investigations Committee Update

The Air Safety Investigations (ASI) Committee's primary task is to provide an objective, controller-based perspective to National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigations of aircraft accidents or incidents that involve air traffic control services. ASI works as part of the team of investigators to determine the probable cause of an aircraft accident and formulate recommendations to prevent future occurrences. On Sept. 29, the NTSB launched an air traffic control workgroup to Ketchikan, Alaska Flight Service Station regarding an accident that occurred on Aug. 5, 2021. NATCA was granted party status and ASI Vice Chair Brandon Johnson (Salt Lake City ATCT, SLC) is serving as the committee's subject matter expert on the NTSB workgroup. The NTSB uses a party system for its investigations, assembling a team of experts. Party members share investigative information with each other. They are prohibited from sharing that information with the public or making comments to the news media or in other public venues including social media.

[Visit the ASI Committee on its webpage here](#)

OSHA Committee Update

The NATCA Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA) Committee was instituted to establish and promote an effective program aimed at improving labor management cooperation and providing methods for employees to raise concerns related to occupational safety and health without fear of reprisal. The OSHA Committee has recently

reviewed a construction and paint project for Portland ATCT (PDX) and Portland TRACON (P80) and provided feedback on chemicals, including suggestions for mitigating bargaining unit employee (BUE) exposure to the chemicals. The committee has also provided reviews and continues to follow up on damage reports in the southwest after Hurricane Ida to determine what, if any, water damage and indoor air quality might affect NATCA BUEs.

Follow the OSHA Committee on its webpage

NATCA Pleased to Welcome Another New FCT: Rapid City, S.D. (RAP)
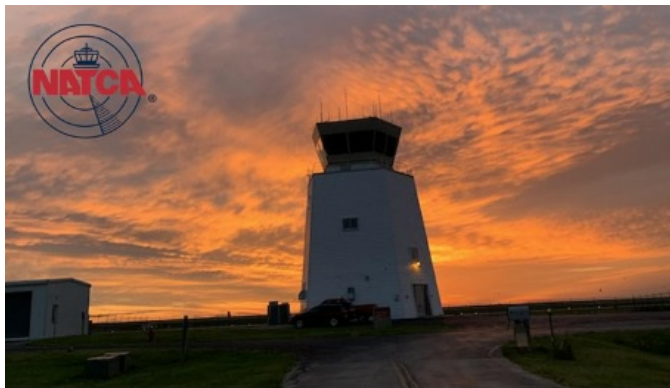
We are pleased to welcome Rapid City ATCT (RAP) as the newest Federal Contract Tower (FCT) in the NATCA family. Located nine miles southeast of Rapid City, in Pennington County, S.D. Rapid City Regional Airport is the closest commercial airport to Mount Rushmore."The decision to unionize and become a member of NATCA was an easy one to make," said RAP FacRep Steven Beardsworth. "In fact, it was a decision we wish we would have made a lot sooner! The helpfulness provided from within the community, the support, and the prompt responses we have gotten from everyone involved with establishing a local, is a good indicator of positive changes to come. We look forward to having our rights and wages not only cared about but fought for by one of the most powerful unions on the (Capitol) Hill." NATCA currently represents 118 FCTs.

Click here to view the list of NATCA-represented FCTs

EmbRACE NCF's Virtual 5K Walk/Run: Be a Buddy, not a Bully

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. The NATCA Charitable Foundation (NCF) is hosting the embRACE "Be a Buddy not a Bully" Virtual 5K Run/Walk to raise money for NCF and KidPower. NCF also hopes to prevent bullying by encouraging people to embrace themselves and others through compassion, kindness, understanding, acceptance, friendship, and respect.

Read more.

Visit our Website