



LEGISLATIVE
UPDATE



Congressional Committee Rosters and NATCA

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The 117th Congress convened on Jan. 3 and the Biden administration took office on Jan. 20. Democrats now control the House, Senate, and White House. The balance of power in the Senate is 50-50, with Vice President Kamala Harris casting tie-breaking votes, which she has already done once. Over the last two months, congressional committees

have named chairs, ranking members, and members to both the full committees and subcommittees. In the House and Senate, Democrats have control of committees, even though the Senate is evenly split, which means they will occupy the chair position, and the Republicans will name their counterpart who will be the ranking member.

NATCA will work with many of the committees during the 117th Congress. There are a few that are of particular importance to us. They include:

- The **House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee**, the **House Aviation Subcommittee**, the **Senate Commerce Committee**, and the **Senate Aviation Safety, Operations, & Innovation Subcommittee**, which have jurisdiction over all modes of transportation, including aviation, and are responsible for drafting the legislation that reauthorizes Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) programs.
- The **Senate and House Appropriations Committees & Subcommittees on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development** are responsible for funding the federal government's programs and activities, including the FAA.
- The **House Committee on Oversight & Reform**, the **House Subcommittee on Government Operations**, and the **Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee**, which have the authority to

provide oversight of any action the federal government takes, including federal workforce policies.

Click on the links below to view the new committee rosters for each of these committees relevant to our Union.

[House T&I Committee](#)

[House Aviation Subcommittee](#)

[Senate Commerce Committee](#)

[Senate Aviation Safety, Operations, & Innovations Subcommittee](#)

[Senate Appropriations Committee](#)

[Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation \(THUD\)](#)

[House Appropriations Committee](#)

[House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation \(THUD\)](#)

[House Committee on Oversight & Reform](#)

[House Subcommittee on Government Operations](#)

[Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee](#)

NATCA must work with the committees to protect organized labor, advance our profession, and ensure the safety of the National Airspace System. This is done through our membership: developing relationships and trust that gives us the ability to educate our lawmakers.

We look forward to working with our legislative activists from across the country and we invite you to participate. To learn more, [contact a member of your National Legislative Committee](#).

Government Affairs Department Update

NATCA Strongly Supports the CONTRACT Act

The Continuity for Operators with Necessary Training Required for ATC Contract Towers (CONTRACT) Act of 2021 would provide an incentive for retired federal controllers to continue working as controllers at the 256 airports that participate in the FAA's Contract Tower Program. NATCA Represents controllers at 115 of those towers. [Click here to see the full list](#). Controllers who retire from federal service would be able to work as controllers at smaller contract tower airports without their federal annuity supplement being reduced or eliminated entirely. Making this simple fix would provide a much-needed financial incentive for retired federal controllers to continue in the career.

NATCA supported the CONTRACT Act in the 116th Congress, but it did not advance through the legislative process at that time. The sponsors of the legislation have reintroduced the bill for consideration in the 117th Congress. It has been reintroduced in the Senate by Senators James Inhofe, R-Okla., and Jerry Moran, R-Kan., and in the House by Representatives by Rodney Davis, R-Ill., and Julia Brownley, D-Calif.

Recently, NATCA joined the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and the U.S. Contract Tower Association (USCTA) in releasing a letter advocating for the passage of the CONTRACT Act. You may see that letter [here](#).

COVID Relief Package Starts with "Vote-a-Rama"

Congress is working to advance President Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID relief proposal, which Democrats want to move quickly, so that the legislation is enacted before unemployment benefits expire on Mar. 14. To fast-track the legislation, congressional leadership is using what is known as the "reconciliation process." This allows them to advance the legislation with a simple majority vote. To start this process, a "vote-a-rama" occurred in the Senate on Feb. 4, a procedure in which an unlimited number of amendments are considered. In this case, none of the amendments hold the force of law, but they are used to give each party the opportunity to force the opposing party's members to take votes on politically sensitive issues. When a vote-a-rama happens, NATCA staff analyze all proposed amendments to identify any that could be problematic for NATCA and our membership and works with House and Senate leadership and allies on both sides of the aisle to avoid any harmful amendments. The vote-a-rama lasted for 14 hours and over 800 amendments were offered. NATCA staff ensured that none of the amendments were harmful to NATCA.

Pete Buttigieg Confirmed as Secretary of Transportation

The Senate has the power to review and approve (or reject) presidential appointees to executive and judicial branch posts. As such, the Senate has been acting on President Biden's nominees for key positions in the government, including leaders of the 15 executive departments. On Feb. 2, Biden's nominee for Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, was confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 86-13. Throughout the confirmation process, Buttigieg received bipartisan praise. [Click here to see NATCA's press release in support of Buttigieg](#). We look forward to working with him.

House Transportation & Infrastructure Hearing on U.S. Aviation

[The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee held a hearing on March 2](#) titled, "COVID-19's Effects on U.S. Aviation and the Flight Path to Recovery." Government Affairs attended this hearing virtually. The hearing explored how COVID-19 has continued to impact the industry and how the sector can be best positioned to recover moving forward. The hearing also highlighted proposed legislation from Aviation Subcommittee Chair Rick Larsen, D-Wash., entitled "the National Aviation Preparedness Plan Act," which would require the development of a national aviation preparedness plan for future public health emergencies, legislation that NATCA supports. Witnesses included leaders from the Government Accountability Office, Airlines for America, Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l., General Aviation Manufacturers Association, American Association of Airport Executives, and the National Business Aviation Association.

Virtual Grassroots in Local Districts

CALIFORNIA



Van Nuys ATCT (VNY) Legislative Rep Peter Kasabian (pictured top left) attended a virtual event for California Congressman Brad Sherman along with other representatives from various industries. "During the meeting, I discussed how helicopter traffic is handled in an already crowded airspace and how fixed-wing pattern work traffic has dramatically increased at Van Nuys Airport," said Kasabian. "Even during the pandemic, more people are learning how to fly."

TEXAS

Houston Center (ZHU) member and National Weather Rep Eric Avila attended a virtual labor breakfast with Texas Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher (pictured right). "The congresswoman shared her experience from Jan. 6 on Capitol Hill and also discussed some of the challenges the 117th Congress has dealt with thus far," said Avila. "During the conversation, I thanked her for her continued commitment to protecting workers rights."



NATCA Academy Virtual Learning: Upcoming Legislative Class

We have an upcoming legislative class scheduled as part of our NATCA Academy Virtual Learning program:



What You Need to Know About Funding the FAA

Tuesday, March 9, Noon EST

Course Description: Having experienced the longest shutdown of the federal government in history, many members were curious how we got there and what can be done to prevent it in the future. NATCA has been advocating for a stable, predictable funding stream for years but many don't understand why. This is your opportunity to learn about the U.S. budgeting and appropriations processes so that you understand the issue and can educate your fellow NATCA members.

To register for this class and many others in the NATCA Academy: Please go to portal.natca.org. Once you have logged in, select "List of Events" from the Events menu tab. Then, select "NATCA Academy Virtual Learning."

For a full list of all upcoming Academy Virtual Learning classes, [please click here](#).

Legislative Resources

Ballotpedia: [Click here](#).

National Legislative Committee: Roster, contacts, information - [Click here](#).

State Legislative Coordinators contact list [Click here](#).

U.S. Senate: Numbers of facilities, members, and bargaining unit members in each state - [Click here](#).

U.S. House of Representatives: Facilities and numbers of members in each congressional district - [Click here](#).

NATCA in Washington 2021: [Click here](#).

Legislative Updates on natca.org: [Click here](#).

Archive of past monthly legislative updates: [Click here](#).

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