

National Air Traffic Controllers Association



February 2, 2026

Speaker Mike Johnson
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Leader Hakeem Jeffries
United States House of Representatives
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Leader Jeffries,

The National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) strongly supports immediate passage of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Other Related Agencies (THUD) appropriations bill.

The aviation safety professionals who NATCA represents, including air traffic controllers, traffic management coordinators, aircraft certification employees, engineers, and others are still recovering from the longest government shutdown in U.S. history that ended just three months ago. Enduring 43 days without pay and not knowing when they would receive their next paycheck was traumatizing for them and their families. Sadly, we find ourselves in similar circumstances again, in the midst of a partial shutdown of the federal government, including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The THUD appropriations bill is not controversial. We thank Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Womack, and Ranking Member Clyburn for their consistent support for aviation safety and the strong bipartisan bill they developed in coordination with their Senate colleagues. On January 22, a three-bill minibus including THUD passed the House floor with a resounding 341-88 vote.

Our nation's air traffic controllers and other aviation safety professionals should not be subjected to the increased stress and financial uncertainty that a shutdown unfairly places on them and their families. They should never be used as political pawns in this or any other government shutdown.

We urge every member of the House of Representatives to support and immediately pass THUD appropriations to restore funding to the FAA so that these patriotic, American professionals who operate our National Airspace System 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week, 365-days-a-year have the funding certainty and support that they deserve. With a shortage of 3,800 fully certified air traffic controllers, the shutdown undermines the recruitment of new trainees and retention of incumbents, even though both the THUD bill and the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 both seek to greatly increase controller staffing.

We would be remiss if we didn't also take this opportunity to urge you to pass the Aviation Funding Solvency Act (H.R. 6086), which would protect the FAA and its employees from future lapses in appropriations. NATCA thanks Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairman Nehls, Ranking Member Carson, and the 18 additional cosponsors for their innovative drafting and hard work to move this bipartisan bill quickly through the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. NATCA strongly supports this bill, which is now awaiting a floor vote in the House. Thank you for your leadership to end this partial government shutdown.

Sincerely,

Nick Daniels
President

cc: Majority Leader Scalice, Majority Whip Emmer, Democratic Whip Clark
Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairman Womack, and Ranking Member Clyburn
Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairman Nehls, and Ranking Member Carson