July 29, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kamala Harris
United States Senate
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Barbara Lee
United States House of Representatives
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein, Senator Harris, and Representative Lee:

On behalf of Port of Oakland, which operates the Oakland International Airport (OAK), I am writing to ask for your support in providing funding assistance to help the nation’s airports and seaports maintain operations during the coronavirus pandemic and to ensure the safety of air travelers and essential workers in the aviation and goods movement sectors.

Now that the Senate has begun working on its next COVID-19 response legislation, we understand that this may be one of the last opportunities during this Congressional session to provide funding needed to preserve our airport operations and to support the goods movement sector. We greatly appreciate that Congress acted expeditiously to provide previous funding for airports in the CARES Act. Those funds have been used to ensure the continued safe operation of our airport, help in the cleaning of our terminals and employee facilities, reduce airport-related debt, and continue the employment of our essential employees.

At a time when OAK passenger enplanements are consistently down 80 percent over last year, the Port has experienced an unprecedented decline in revenue. In addition to reduced air service, we continue to experience a dramatic loss of revenue from parking, restaurants, and other concessionaires that rely on passenger traffic. Because the Port of Oakland operates as a consolidated seaport and airport authority, we have had to take extraordinary measures to reduce capital expenditures priorities at both the airport and seaport to life/safety, essential state of good repair, and revenue-preserving projects.

Emergency funds are needed to fund operations, payroll obligations, debt service requirements, existing construction projects, and recovery efforts. In addition, we ask that Congress provide the airport funds based on passenger enplanements to ensure that the busiest airports receive the funds they need. Finally, we ask that the Congress afford the same level of flexibility provided to airports in the CARES Act, which authorized the use of funds for “any purpose for which...
airport revenues may lawfully be used.”

Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do to help address the COVID-19 public health crisis. We appreciate that there are not unlimited resources but ask that in this time of great uncertainty that Congress take steps to enable airports and seaports to serve the needs of essential businesses and travelers during this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Danny Wan
Executive Director

cc: Bryant Francis, Director of Aviation, Port of Oakland
    Bryan Brandes, Director of Maritime, Port of Oakland
    Matt Davis, Director of Governmental Affairs, Port of Oakland