



**National Conference of State Legislatures
Office of State-Federal Relations**

March 22, 2016

Congress Approves Short-Term FAA Extension; Continues Work on Long-Term Reauthorization

On March 21, the U.S. House of Representatives approved [H.R. 4721](#), a short-term extension through July 15 of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The Senate approved the bill last week just prior to adjourning for its spring recess. Without passage of the extension, authorization for the FAA would have expired at the end March.

In the Senate, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee [approved](#) a two-year reauthorization for the FAA on Wednesday March 16 and it is expected to come to the Senate floor in April. [NCSL issued a letter highlighting our significant concerns](#) over language in the bill that would preempt states from enacting or enforcing legislation on unmanned aerial systems (UAS). The language would also undo the work of 26 states that have already enacted legislation pertaining to the use of UAS and only serve to exacerbate the uncertainty of this technology.

In the other chamber, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee [approved](#) a six-year reauthorization in February. The House version does not include drone preemption language. However, a number of lawmakers in both parties have expressed concerns the bill seeks to privatize air traffic control operations away from FAA. There is currently no floor vote scheduled and it remains unclear when, if it all, such a vote would take place. NCSL did send a [letter](#) to committee leader regarding our concerns with the bill including the section preempting states on intrastate transportation matters, its lack of an increase in the Passenger Facility Charge as well as our hope that the State Block Grant Program is increased to allow all states to participate.

For any additional questions or concerns please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Melanie Condon](#) (202-624-3597).