12 December 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I’m writing on behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-United States of America to urge Congressional leaders to come to resolution on issues that are preventing a long-term reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration. IEEE-USA was encouraged to see the action by the House and Senate in September to approve a four-month extension of FAA funding and programs at current funding levels through January 31, 2012.

However, recognizing this is the 22nd FAA extension since the 2007 expiration of the previous long-term law, it is our goal to support Congress in meeting its objective of assuring the safety of future air transportation by providing a multi-year reauthorization to ensure that the FAA’s Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) is not delayed.

Overhaul of our National Airspace System (NAS) through the NextGen promises to make air travel more convenient and dependable while ensuring our nation continues to have the safest most secure flights possible.

NextGen will transform our NAS from the current World War II-era ground-based navigation, radar & voice communication system to a modern satellite and performance-based system. It will enhance air safety and reduce expenses by allowing planes to fly closer to one another and to follow more direct flight paths. Parceling out money to the FAA in short term increments makes it very difficult to plan the long term improvements we need for NextGen. Prompt action on a long-term authorization is vitally needed to avoid such potentially harmful consequences.

IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of 210,000 engineering, computing and technology professionals who are U.S. members of IEEE. http://www.ieeeusa.org. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Bill Williams in our Washington office at (202) 530-8331 or email at bill.williams@ieee.org.

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Jensen
IEEE-USA President

RGJ:bw/mcs
12 December 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Office of the Senate Majority Leader  
S-221 Capitol Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

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