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## **FAA Extension Stalls in Senate**

**July 22, 2011**

The Senate this afternoon rejected efforts to pass a short-term FAA extension. Since Congress was unable to send an extension to the President's desk before the current measure expires at midnight, the FAA will be forced to furlough 4,000 employees and delay grants for airport construction projects.

Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin (D-IL) tried unsuccessfully to get unanimous consent to pass a "clean" version of H.R. 2553, the short-term FAA extension that the House approved earlier this week. The unanimous consent request proposed to replace the House-passed bill with language drafted by Commerce Committee Chairman John D. Rockefeller (D-WV) and Ranking Member Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX) that excluded the controversial Essential Air Service provisions. However, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) objected.

Hatch then tried to get unanimous consent to pass H.R. 2553 as passed by the House. The bill would extend aviation programs and excise taxes through September 16. However, it includes two controversial provisions that would eliminate EAS to more than a dozen communities. Democrats strongly oppose the policy riders, and Durbin objected to Hatch's effort to have the Senate approve the House-passed bill.

The House had already adjourned for the day. But the bottom line is that the stalemate over a short-term FAA extension and a multi-year FAA reauthorization bill continues. Lawmakers' inability to pass a short-term extension this week means that there will be a partial shutdown of the FAA, and grants for critical airport safety and capacity projects will continue to be delayed.

We will have more to report next week.

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