American Bus Association

June 5, 2026

The Honorable Troy E. Nehls
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable André Carson
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Hearing on "Connecting Rural America to the National Airspace System"

Dear Chairman Nehls and Ranking Member Carson:

On behalf of the American Bus Association (ABA), thank you for holding the Subcommittee's hearing on June 4, 2026, regarding "Connecting Rural America to the National Airspace System." ABA appreciates the Subcommittee's continued focus on improving aviation access, strengthening transportation connectivity, and ensuring that communities of all sizes can remain connected to the national airspace system.

ABA represents the private motorcoach, charter bus, tour, and group travel industry. Our members provide safe, reliable, and efficient transportation for schools, seniors, military groups, commuters, tourists, major events, airport passengers, and rural communities across the country. As the Subcommittee continues to examine how to better connect rural America through aviation, we believe private motorcoaches should be viewed as a willing and capable partner in strengthening the broader aviation transportation network.

ABA recently wrote to the Transportation Security Administration regarding the emerging off-site screening and secure transportation model being advanced in Massachusetts in connection with Massport's new Logan Airport Remote Terminal at Framingham. That pilot program presents the kind of forward-looking thinking that major transportation hubs increasingly require. As air travel volumes continue to grow, the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) work to create additional "front doors" into the aviation system through off-site screening and

secure transportation can help reduce congestion, improve passenger flow, strengthen the traveler experience, and support airport efficiency.

This concept is directly relevant to the Subcommittee's continued work on rural aviation access. In many communities, the challenge is not only whether commercial air service is available, but whether passengers can efficiently, affordably, and reliably reach the aviation system. Private motorcoaches already serve as a critical connector between airports, as well as communities, regional hubs, universities, military installations, tourist destinations, and major events. With the right federal coordination and security framework, that role can be expanded to help bring more passengers into the aviation system in a secure, organized, and scalable way.

The private motorcoach industry has the operational reach, professional driver workforce, safety culture, and passenger transportation experience needed to support this effort. Our operators regularly move passengers safely and efficiently to airports, convention centers, sporting events, cruise terminals, military movements, and major national events. The industry is accustomed to transportation assets and passengers that require elevated operational coordination, security awareness, credentialing, and reliability.

According to the ABA Foundation's 2025 Bus Census, the private bus industry includes thousands of operators and more than 40 billion passenger miles annually. The census also found that in 2025, the private bus industry ranked behind only airlines in total annual passenger boardings in the United States, with nearly 350 million passenger boardings. This scale matters because it demonstrates that private motorcoaches are not a niche transportation option, but a major component of the national passenger transportation network.

ABA believes the off-site screening and secure transportation model should be further evaluated as part of the broader conversation around aviation access, airport congestion, and rural connectivity. If successful, this model could help airports manage terminal capacity, help airlines and passengers move more efficiently, and help smaller or more distant communities connect into the aviation system through secure ground transportation links.

ABA is particularly interested in working with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, TSA, airports, airlines, and Congress to better understand how this concept can be scaled responsibly. Important questions include how operators could qualify to participate, what security standards and credentialing requirements would apply, how equipment and vehicle security would be handled, how passenger and baggage screening would be integrated, and how federal agencies could develop a clear framework for trusted private transportation providers.

The industry does not view this as a replacement for commercial air service in rural communities. Rather, it should be seen as a complementary tool that can help strengthen the full passenger journey. In some markets, secure motorcoach connections could help rural passengers reach regional airports more efficiently. In others, they could support remote terminals, reduce airport curbside congestion, create more predictable passenger flows, and expand the practical reach of existing air service.

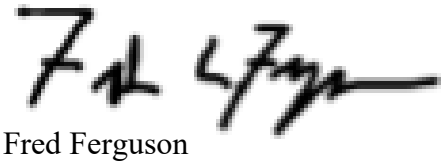
This model could also support domestic transportation supply chains and workforce development. Building a larger and more qualified network of participating private transportation providers can deepen operational capacity, create new business opportunities for motorcoach operators, and support TSA's long-term mission of secure transportation while strengthening a critical American industry.

ABA and its members share the same fundamental goals around safety, security, efficiency, and public confidence. As the role of motorcoaches continues expanding within the broader transportation ecosystem, the industry is ready to engage in deeper conversations about hardened equipment, driver credentialing standards, airport and TSA coordination, facility security, passenger handling, and additional best practices that support national transportation security objectives.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's attention to the needs of rural communities and the importance of connecting passengers to the national airspace system. Following the hearing, we respectfully encourage the Subcommittee to continue considering the role private motorcoaches can play in supporting secure, efficient, and scalable aviation access models, including off-site screening and secure transportation pilots. ABA stands ready to work with the Subcommittee, TSA, airports, airlines, and other stakeholders to help evaluate this concept, identify practical implementation criteria, and ensure the motorcoach industry can serve as a long-term partner in improving aviation connectivity.

Thank you for your leadership on these important issues. We respectfully request that this letter be included in the hearing record.

Sincerely,



Fred Ferguson
President and CEO
American Bus Association