

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2308

January 14, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Duffy:

First, I want to extend my deep appreciation to you and the Department of Transportation for the recent \$20 million investment in the Duluth International Airport's (DLH) Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) project. During your August 2025 visit to DLH, you saw that the tower is in desperate need of replacement, and federal investment is critical to make this project possible. For these reasons, I am submitting this letter of support to accompany the Duluth Airport Authority's application for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) final round of Airport Terminal Program (ATP) grant funding.

As you well know, DLH provides a vital service to the region. Commercial, cargo, research and development, military, and medical service flights all utilize the airport. The airport is home to Cirrus Aircraft, one of the largest manufacturers of piston aircraft in the world, and to the 148th Fighter Wing of the Minnesota Air National Guard, making it crucial to our economic and national security. The airport supports over 4,000 jobs and contributes roughly \$1.4 billion to the economy. DLH is an economic driver for both the region and the state, and its continued operation is crucial.

Unfortunately, the existing tower is over 70 years old, making it the third-oldest air traffic control tower in the country. It does not meet current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) line-of-sight requirements, and it is deteriorating rapidly. To sustain the growth of air commerce in this region of our state, a new air traffic control facility is necessary for enhanced safety and viability.

As a locally-owned air traffic facility staffed by FAA Controllers, the control tower at DLH has not previously qualified for federal funding. The ATP presented a unique five-year opportunity to compete for funding. With this last round of funding available, I strongly support allocating the remaining funds necessary to move this tower project forward.

In accordance with program rules, the FAA determined the federal eligibility for this project to be just over 79%. With a 24% non-federal share in hand, DLH has already met the matching-funds requirement, demonstrating strong local and state commitment to the project. However, to further demonstrate its dedication to the project, DLH is requesting another \$4 million from the state in the next legislative session. This will increase the non-federal share of total funding to 29.4%.

Mr. Secretary, this project is shovel-ready, pending the final funding needed to begin construction. For these reasons, I ask that DAA receive the full amount needed to get this project underway.

I look forward to continuing our work together to keep our skies safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pete Stauber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pete" and last name "Stauber" clearly distinguishable.

Pete Stauber
Member of Congress