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Dear Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee:

Founded in 1884, the Columbus Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice of business within the 11-county Columbus Region, with nearly 1,400 members employing over 500,000 workers. A focus of the Chamber's government relations efforts centers on transportation and Infrastructure, advocating for a fully integrated and advanced multi-modal transportation network, including air and freight options to ensure the growth and sustainability of the region's robust logistics, manufacturing, and related industries. The Columbus Region Logistics Council (CRLC), an initiative of the Columbus Chamber, includes a diverse group of 115 member companies that span the supply chain and logistics industries. CRLC serves as the catalyst for the growth of the region's logistics capability and leads the implementation of a strategic road map that will continue to grow this tremendous asset.

Air transportation is a key contributor to Ohio's economy. The airport industry employs approximately 123,500 people throughout Ohio's 104 publicly owned airports with these employees receiving \$4.2 billion in total payroll and generating over \$13 billion in total economic activity. This high level of economic activity can also be seen in the Columbus Region, which is home to two of the largest commercial service airports in Ohio—John Glenn International and Rickenbacker International Airport.

John Glenn International employs approximately 33,464 people who receive \$1.1 billion in total payroll and generating over \$3.7 billion in economic activity. John Glenn International served over 7.3 million passengers in 2016, with over 150 daily flights to more than 41 destinations. Annual passenger traffic was up 7.8 percent, which is half a million more passengers than in 2015 and 15 percent more than in 2014.

Each of these flights represents an economic relationship that we enjoy with other states and metro areas. Direct flights in particular help to enhance relationships and the goods and services able to be exchanged between markets. They represent the people and businesses that travel to and from Ohio, bringing their talents and their capital to our markets.

Rickenbacker International Airport is one of the world's only and most active cargo-dedicated airports employing 4,806 people and generating \$903 million in economic activity. Apparel, auto parts, and even livestock are imported and exported from Rickenbacker each week making it one of the 10 most active foreign trade zones in the nation moving more than \$6.2 billion of the nation's total \$8.9 billion in textile and footwear imports. This freight is consolidated from markets as far as 300 miles away, generating economic activity and creating jobs in Ohio. Investments in this infrastructure support more flights inbound and outbound by both charter aircraft and regularly scheduled flights from major international cargo airlines Cathay Pacific, Cargolux, Emirates SkyCargo and Etihad Cargo.

Both commercial airlines and air freight contribute significantly to the ability of the state and Central Ohio to attract and retain businesses. In order for the Columbus Region to grow and compete on a global stage, the Columbus Chamber, along with our partners at the Columbus Region Airport Authority, continue to seek new opportunities to expand and sustain service, and the infrastructure to support it. The goals of H.B. 206 are similarly aligned, and therefore, we offer this testimony as an interested party.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Holly Gross
Vice President, Government Relations