



February 14, 2025

House Transportation Finance & Policy Committee  
Rep. John Koznick, Chair  
Rep. Erin Koegel, DFL Lead

Dear House Transportation Finance & Policy Committee Members:

On behalf of the Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, I write in support of state funding for upgrades to the Duluth International Airport's (DIA) Air Traffic Control Tower.

The Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce, our state's third largest Chamber, fully recognizes that Northeastern Minnesota is a growing hub for advanced aviation and aerospace innovation. Yet, to continue being a national leader in this space, the Airport needs to replace the 3<sup>rd</sup> oldest Air Traffic Control Tower in the nation.

\$14 million from the state legislature for a new Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) would go to leverage a significant federal investment. This funding allows us a better opportunity to secure an additional \$45 million from the FAA's Airport Terminal Program (ATP), established through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. Without state support, this federal funding will not come to Minnesota. The ATP Grant program provides a 5-year window to secure funding that will pay 95% of eligible costs to construct the new \$70 million ATCT at the DIA.

With only one year left to access this federal funding, the urgency to act is clear. The \$14 million in state funding offers a unique opportunity to secure substantial federal support, modernize our infrastructure, and strengthen the DIA as a key economic asset for the region. This allocation is more than just a financial investment. It is a critical step toward securing our region's economic future and ensuring safe and efficient air travel.

The DIA contributes approximately nearly \$1 billion annually to the local economy, supporting jobs and businesses that drive growth. Now is the time to invest in our airport's future, ensuring DLH continues to be a driving force in our regional economy for years to come.

Thank you for considering this effort.

Respectfully,

Matt Baumgartner, MBA  
President  
Duluth Area Chamber of Commerce