AUVSI Recap: FAA Reauthorization 2023

Over the past year, Congress has been focused on the 2023 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization. This is the first time in five years that Congress is reauthorizing the FAA, which presents significant opportunity for all aviation stakeholders to advance their respective priorities.

The bill reauthorizes critical FAA programs to ensure the FAA has the resources it needs to effectively regulate the National Airspace System (NAS). There are components of every FAA Reauthorization that are the same, but as the aviation industry continues to evolve, so too does this legislation.

FAA Reauthorization is the most significant of all aviation-related legislation in Congress. The bill's enactment has broad ranging impacts for the American public.

AUVSI’s Involvement with Key Members of Congress and Committees

All different segments of the aviation industry have been lobbying for their priorities over the past year (or longer), including those spanning from airports, to general aviation, to commercial airlines, to the uncrewed/autonomous/robotics/advanced aviation communities, and much more.

Trade associations like AUVSI are an important resource as Congress, who is always up against tight timelines, works on this legislation. AUVSI and other groups provide Congress the ability to quickly educate themselves on the perspectives of entire sectors of the aviation industry, and solicit their priorities all at once, rather than through piecemeal engagements with individual companies.

AUVSI has been at the forefront of lobbying for the interests of the uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS), Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), and autonomy industries/stakeholders. Our core FAA Reauthorization priorities were informed by our most important asset – our members. AUVSI would be nothing without them!

AUVSI’s FAA Reauthorization Timeline

In June 2022, we underwent a methodical and complex process to gather FAA Reauthorization priorities to first respond to calls for feedback from Capitol Hill.

We refined that process and the associated priorities during the ensuing months and had countless key engagements with Capitol Hill staff and Members of Congress to push our agenda. These engagements included individual and joint letters, emails, in-person and virtual meetings, briefings, listening sessions, Air Advocacy Committee guest speakers, and much more.

Once the House FAA Reauthorization bill (H.R.3935 - Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act) started to come together and advance this year, AUVSI was intimately involved with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee markup, House Rules Committee consideration, and the House Floor consideration process.
We supported and opposed various amendments and were extremely communicative with our members throughout the process.

On the Senate side, despite their being further behind, we have laid significant groundwork and put ourselves in a great position once markup is hopefully rescheduled imminently after the Senate returns from their August recess.

**AUVSI’s Lobbying Successes**

The House and Senate FAA Reauthorization bills include language in the following areas that AUVSI lobbied heavily on (this is a non-exhaustive list):

- Beyond visual line of sight operations (BVLOS) and timelines of the forthcoming rulemaking;
- Chinese drones;
- Section 44807;
- Powered-lift electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) and timelines of forthcoming rulemakings;
- AAM issues generally, inclusive of Urban Air Mobility (UAM) and Regional Air Mobility (RAM), including opening potential project funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP);
- UAS traffic management (UTM);
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) issues and environmental reviews;
- Operations Over the High Seas;
- UAS Test Sites;
- Part 107 operations; and
- Shielded operations and critical infrastructure operations.

This is just the tip of the iceberg of what is included in the House and Senate FAA Reauthorization bills.

Congress’ efforts are sure to inject much needed stability into the FAA, especially as it continues to grapple with no permanent Administrator at the helm and a host of “Acting” directors throughout multiple lines of business.

**What’s Next**

AUVSI is proud of the work we have done to date on FAA Reauthorization. The final legislation will benefit AUVSI’s members and the broader community, both immediately after enactment and progressively for years to come.

We urge the Senate to mark up and pass their bill as soon as possible so a formal conference can ensue, and President Biden can speedily sign the bill into law.