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U.S. Department of Transportation Announces \$41.14 Million in Funding for USVI Airports in Response to Coronavirus

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Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix By. VI PORT AUTHORITY

WASHINGTON – U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao announced today the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will award \$41,145,247 in airport aid to the Henry E. Rohlsen and Cyril E. King airports in the U.S. Virgin Islands to help respond to the coronavirus public health emergency. This historic grant funding is part of the Trump Administration's newly created Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Airport Grant Program, an effort to provide unprecedented and immediate relief to American families, workers, and businesses.

“This \$10 billion in emergency resources will help fund the continued operations of our nation’s airports during this crisis and save workers’ jobs,” said Ms. Chao.

This funding will support continuing operations and replace lost revenue resulting from the sharp decline in passenger traffic and other airport business due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The funds are available for airport capital expenditures, airport operating expenses including payroll and utilities, and airport debt payments.

“Thank you to the dedicated men and women from the FAA’s Office of Airports for creating an entirely new program in record time to assist airport sponsors in desperate need of these funds,” said FAA Administrator Steve Dickson.

The FAA encouraged airport sponsors to spend the grant funds immediately to help minimize any adverse impact from the current public health emergency. Airport sponsors should work with their local FAA Office of Airports field office on the application and grant-agreement process.

The CARES Act also provides funds to increase the Federal share to 100 percent for grants awarded under the fiscal year 2020 appropriations for Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and Supplemental Discretionary grants. Under normal circumstances, AIP grant recipients contribute a matching percentage of the project costs. Providing this additional funding and eliminating the local share will allow critical safety and capacity projects to continue as planned regardless of airport sponsors’ current financial circumstances, the Transportation Department said.

The FAA will use a streamlined application and grant-agreement process to make this funding immediately available for critical airport needs. The funds will be available as soon as the airport sponsor executes a grant agreement.

The CARES Act provides new funds distributed by various formulas for all airports that are part of the national airport system. This includes all commercial service airports, all reliever airports and some public-owned general aviation airports.