



Commonwealth Ports Authority

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CPA to receive over \$22 million from CARES Act Airport Grants

On March 27, 2020, the CARES Act appropriated nearly \$10 billion to eligible airports to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus impacts, including support for continuing airport operations.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is pleased to announce that it will be receiving \$22.8 million under the CARES Act Airport Grant to support continued airport operations. These funds will be used to ensure that CPA's airports are reliable and safe, support the economy, keep airport workers employed, and keep airport credit ratings stable.

"Back in January when CPA and Governor Ralph DLG. Torres first began their discussion regarding the closure of the ports to contain the spread of COVID-19 into the CNMI, the Governor instructed CPA to be proactive and reach out to our federal partners to address the potential economic fallout. Throughout the course of these past several months, CPA has been in direct communication with the FAA, documenting the economic impact as a result of the suspension of flights. CPA is thankful for this relief which will allow it to continue to fund operations and service our debt," stated CPA Chairwoman Kimberlyn King-Hinds.

The CARES Act Airport Grants is aside and separate from the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants. The funding authority divides the \$10 billion into four groups. Group 1 funding allocates \$500 million to increase the federal share to 100 percent for AIP and supplemental discretionary grants already planned and awarded for fiscal year 2020. "This is great news because this funding will allow CPA to move forward with our federally funded projects without having to worry about our local matching share that we were preserving for airport operations. CPA is thankful for the strong partnership and continued support from the FAA," stated CPA Executive Director Chris Tenorio.

Group 2 funding allocates at least \$7.4 billion for commercial service airports, such as CPA. Group 3 funding allocates up to 2 billion for primary commercial airports, and Group 4 funding allocates at least \$100 million for general aviation airports.

In a joint statement, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Arnold I. Palacios thanked both the FAA and the DOT for including CPA as a recipient of this available funding: "Maintaining our ability to fund our ports operations during this time is critical to our ability to ensure that we get the necessary supplies in and out of the CNMI for both the general public and our COVID-19 response efforts. As we look past our current situation and into the future, maintaining airport operations is critical to stabilizing and growing our economy when we are ready to open our borders. We would like to extend our appreciation to CPA and our federal partners for continuing to assist the Commonwealth in our ongoing fight against COVID-19 and our efforts to address the economic downturn caused by this pandemic."

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