

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1766

To amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to eliminate the application of the sequestration to funds associated with the operation of air traffic control towers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 26, 2013

Ms. WATERS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on the Budget

A BILL

To amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to eliminate the application of the sequestration to funds associated with the operation of air traffic control towers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Safe and Reliable Air
5 Travel Act of 2013”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Sequestration is having a devastating effect
2 on the Nation's air traffic control system.

3 (2) Sequestration imposes a reduction in fund-
4 ing of \$637 million on the Federal Aviation Admin-
5 istration (FAA) for the remainder of fiscal year
6 2013.

7 (3) The FAA plans to furlough the vast major-
8 ity of the FAA's nearly 47,000 employees, including
9 nearly 15,000 air traffic controllers, for approxi-
10 mately one day during each two-week pay period in
11 order to comply with sequestration.

12 (4) The furloughs began on Sunday, April 21,
13 2013, and are scheduled to continue through the end
14 of the fiscal year on September 30, 2013. Approxi-
15 mately 10 percent of the FAA's air traffic control-
16 lers are expected to be on furlough on any given day
17 during this period.

18 (5) The furloughs are causing hundreds of
19 flights to be delayed, resulting in scheduling difficul-
20 ties for airlines and inconveniences for passengers.

21 (6) The FAA reported that approximately 400
22 flights were delayed nationwide on April 21, 2013,
23 as a result of the furloughs.

1 (7) The FAA reported that more than 1,200
2 flights were delayed nationwide on April 22, 2013,
3 as a result of the furloughs.

4 (8) More delays are expected in the coming
5 months during the peak summer travel season.

6 (9) The effects of multiple flight delays at air-
7 ports across the Nation can be compounded as
8 delays at one airport cause planes to arrive late at
9 other airports and also cause passengers to miss
10 connecting flights.

11 (10) Air carriers operating in United States air
12 space transport more than 700 million passengers
13 every year.

14 (11) Civil aviation accounts for 10 million jobs,
15 is responsible for more than 5 percent of the United
16 States gross domestic product, and contributes \$1.3
17 trillion to the economy every year.

18 (12) Businesses of all sizes depend upon a reli-
19 able commercial air transportation system. Business
20 travelers account for millions of trips each month.

21 (13) Flight delays for business travelers inter-
22 fere with business plans and result in business meet-
23 ings being delayed, cancelled, or missed.

24 (14) Flight delays affecting the transportation
25 of air cargo also interfere with business.

1 (15) The Nation's economy depends upon a re-
2 liable commercial air transportation system.

3 (16) The FAA also plans to close 149 air traf-
4 fic control towers at small airports across the Nation
5 on June 15, 2013, in order to comply with seques-
6 tration. Despite their size, these airports are an im-
7 portant part of the Nation's air transportation sys-
8 tem and economy.

9 (17) Air traffic control is a critical government
10 function that is necessary to ensure the safety of air
11 travel and the flying public.

12 (18) Inadequate staffing of airport control tow-
13 ers poses a serious threat to public safety.

14 (19) Without the service of experienced air traf-
15 fic controllers in all of the Nation's Federal air traf-
16 fic control towers, there is an increased risk of acci-
17 dents involving planes during departure, flight, and
18 landing. Such accidents could result in a tragic loss
19 of life.

20 (20) The sequestration of funds associated with
21 the operation of air traffic control towers by the
22 FAA interferes with the safety, reliability, and effi-
23 ciency of the Nation's air transportation system.

24 (21) The operation of air traffic control towers
25 by the FAA, including the compensation paid to air

1 traffic control personnel employed by the FAA,
2 should be exempted from sequestration.

3 **SEC. 3. EXEMPTION FROM SEQUESTRATION FOR OPER-**
4 **ATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWERS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 255 of the Balanced
6 Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2
7 U.S.C. 905) is amended by adding at the end the following
8 new subsection:

9 “(k) OPERATION OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOW-
10 ERS.—The following funds shall be exempt from reduction
11 under any order issued under this part:

12 “(1) Funds made available for the operation of
13 air traffic control towers by the Federal Aviation
14 Administration, including compensation paid to air
15 traffic control personnel employed by the Federal
16 Aviation Administration.

17 “(2) Funds made available for the operation of
18 contract air traffic control towers under section
19 47124 of title 49, United States Code.”.

20 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
21 section 1 shall apply to the Presidential sequestration
22 order for fiscal year 2013 issued under section 251A of
23 the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act

1 of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901a) and any subsequent sequestra-
2 tion order issued under that Act.

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