



CITY OF MERCED

MERCED

The Honorable Melissa Hurtado
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 6510
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Senate Bill 661 – Airports: financial assistance – SUPPORT (As Amended April 7, 2025)

Dear Senator Hurtado,

On behalf of the City of Merced, I am writing to express our support for Senate Bill (SB) 661, the Airport Expansion and Regional Optimization (AERO) Act. This important legislation establishes a sustainable, dedicated funding stream for California airports to enhance statewide air connectivity, improve infrastructure, and expand access to reliable air transportation for communities across our state.

California's airports—especially those in small and mid-sized regions—are essential drivers of local economies, workforce development, and equitable mobility. Yet many lack the consistent investment needed to modernize facilities, attract new airlines, and meet rising passenger and cargo demands. Without targeted support, these airports struggle to provide the critical services that residents and businesses depend on.

By directing state sales tax revenue from aviation fuel toward airport improvements and workforce development, SB 661 will help close these gaps. The bill also calls for a strategic plan to expand flight availability through state and local collaboration, ensuring that investments are guided by data, market studies, and community needs.

SB 661 represents a forward-thinking solution that not only strengthens our transportation infrastructure but also supports high-quality job creation in aviation, logistics, and hospitality—sectors that are vital to California's economic health.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support SB 661 and thank you for your leadership on this most important issue. Should you have any questions, please contact our legislative advocate Sharon Gonsalves with California Public Policy Group at 916-974-9270.

Sincerely,

Matthew Serratto
Mayor
City of Merced

CC: Members and Staff of the Senate Transportation Committee
The Honorable Anna M. Caballero, Senate District 14