

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 10, 2024

The Honorable Michael Whitaker  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Whitaker,

We write to express our concerns about the inadequate staffing levels of technical operations professionals in the FAA's San Antonio System Support Center. It is our understanding that the number of qualified and credentialed radar technicians has been cut in half since 2022, with further staffing challenges currently limiting the service area to one full-time technician. We have learned that during severe weather, an inoperable radar system can lead to further flight delays or cancellations for San Antonio residents and visitors.

The November 2023 [National Airspace System Safety Review Team \(SRT\) report](#) highlighted several recommendations addressing the FAA's process integrity. With specific regard to technician staffing, the report noted that a "well-trained and sufficiently staffed technical workforce could, in many cases, conduct more efficient, flexible, and less expensive system support." The SRT recommended that the FAA "advance a flexible technical operations staffing model to accurately determine system needs by accounting for a workforce that maintains and installs systems and equipment as well as performs other duties." It went on to state, "This model should enable robust training, fatigue mitigation, and 'bubble' staffing (advanced hiring)."

The situation in San Antonio is a prime example of where the FAA should mitigate staffing shortages by hiring, training, and certifying technical staff to be ready to assume those critical radar maintenance duties as technicians retire. With only one full-time technician to service three radar sites, each of which is between 120 and 200 miles away from San Antonio, it is clear that challenges keeping all sites operable may arise. Given that air travel has resumed to pre-pandemic levels, it is important that this vital equipment is maintained and fully operational to ensure a safe and efficient air traffic control system.

We recognize that you are early in your tenure as administrator and are pleased that you have already taken steps to address some of the recommendations in the SRT. Considering the specific

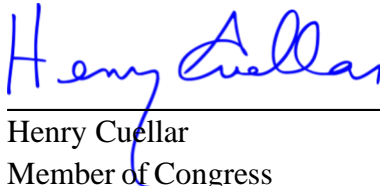
staffing shortage in San Antonio, we respectfully request the agency take immediate steps to ensure that the facility is fully staffed.

Sincerely,




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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



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Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress



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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress