



Opinion

Letters to the Editor

Don't privatize air traffic control. Do this instead.

Readers respond to Post articles and commentary.

Yesterday at 12:57 p.m. EST

The Nov. 24 editorial "[Privatize air traffic control](#)" did not mention the troubling realities about the flaws in other countries' privatized air traffic control models.

For example, [the International Civil Aviation Organization](#) found that Canada's safety oversight of its privatized system, NAV Canada, has been significantly degraded since 2005 and now [ranks below most other](#) Group of Seven countries in key safety categories. Other privatized systems similarly experience significant flight delays, air traffic controller shortages and technology deployment failures.

Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy has proposed a better alternative with bipartisan support in Congress to modernize air traffic control. It would add thousands of new controllers and invest in facilities and equipment, including new fiber, cellular and satellite communication systems.

This plan, combined with bipartisan legislation gaining momentum in Congress that would shield the Federal Aviation Administration from future funding lapses, is the best path forward. A bill that allows the agency to draw from funds already paid into the system by aviation users would provide the funding stability the agency needs to preserve safety, maintain operational integrity and ensure that critical aviation functions continue without disruption.

In short, modernization combined with funding continuity will usher in a new era of air transportation, ensuring that America's aviation system remains the gold standard in decades to come.

Ed Bolen, Nick Daniels and **David Spero**, *Washington*

Ed Bolen is president and CEO of the National Business Aviation Association. Nick Daniels is president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association. David Spero is president of the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists.

Unpacking a 'sleepy' case

Alaska Attorney General Stephen J. Cox's Nov. 26 op-ed, "[This 'sleepy' Supreme Court case could change Americans' lives](#)," argued that lawsuits filed by several Louisiana parishes against oil companies are "an attempt to reshape national policy through state courts." They are nothing of the kind. The only policy question at issue is whether oil companies are above the law or must obey it.

The substantive issue is the industry's role in Louisiana's loss of more than 2,000 square miles of land between 1932 and 2016. Though this loss has multiple causes, the industry's own studies concede they have caused much of it. Consultants to the American Petroleum Institute ascribed 34 percent of the land loss in the mid-1970s to oil companies, and a study by the Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association, the trade association for major oil companies, concluded in 1989 that canals dredged by industry were "the overwhelming cause" of land loss at the sites studied. The Louisiana lawsuits are specific and limited to such sites.

The only question is whether the companies are liable for the damage they caused: Not only did the companies injure property, but they also routinely ignored restrictions that permits placed on them. For example, internal company documents warned executives that company operations were "flagrant violations of the law."

The cases are simple. They were filed in state courts under state causes of action. The Federal District Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit, the most conservative and oil-friendly in the country, agreed the case under consideration should remain in state court. The only national issue that these lawsuits raise is the principle that no one is above the law.

John M. Barry, *New Orleans*
