

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

February 20, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I believe you and I share a vision for change in our government, change built on respect for constitutional law and a proper balance between the rights of our citizens and necessary improvements in national security.

On December 10, 2008, TSA issued Security Directive (SD) 1542-04-08F that requires General Aviation (GA) pilots and anyone else who wishes unescorted access to the Air Operations Area (AOA) to possess a locally designed identification badge and to undergo a TSA Security Threat Assessment (STA) prior to being issued an AOA ID badge. The AOA is defined as all areas inside the perimeter fence

TSA's stated intent for this new requirement is to target individuals with regular and routine unescorted access to the AOA, which includes GA pilots. The glaring deficiency in this directive is that TSA is apparently not interested in transient GA pilots transiting a commercial airport. So home based GA pilots at commercial airfields will have to fill out an extensive application, pay a considerable fee, and wait an indefinite period while their name is checked against a list, while watching transient pilots have free and unchallenged access to the AOA.

This directive is yet another unfunded mandate, without clear rationale or justification. Local airports must fund the considerable administrative cost. Many of our small airports, providing essential air service to isolated rural communities, will find this additional and costly requirement onerous and burdensome.

America's GA pilots have not been shown to be a significant security threat and inconsistently applying another level of bureaucratic supervision threatens to further undermine these loyal American's faith and confidence in your Department. If TSA rules, policies and agents are viewed as an expensive, ineffective, bureaucratic nuisance, our general security posture will degrade.

I urge you to review Security Directive (SD) 1542-04-08F and consider my concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Schweitzer", with a stylized flourish at the end.

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
Governor