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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-3102

November 5, 2007

The Honorable Mary E. Peters
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Peters,

It has come to my attention the Department of Homeland Security is exploring the possibility of imposing strict and unnecessary regulations on small, private planes flying over American international borders. While I understand the need to protect the United States from another 9/11 style attack, any change must be specific and logical.

Many of the planes affected by this rulemaking would not weigh nearly enough to do any sort of feasible damage upon impact. As a pilot, I understand how most small propeller based planes are not capable of achieving the same level of damage on the September 11, 2001 scale. The speeds at which these planes travel would allow the United States Air Force more than enough time to scramble and intercept a plane which is entering American airspace near Rochester or Burlington and heading towards a major population center such as New York City.

Finally, new clearance requirements which would call for pilots to request entry into the United States 30 minutes before take off. As someone who has flown from Mexico to my hometown of Hobbs, New Mexico on dozens of instances can tell you how radio strength and lack of manpower could cause thousands of travelers to be grounded in foreign countries.

Defending our nation and citizens is our highest priority, however, in doing so we must implement rules and regulations that allow commerce, tourism, and travel in a fair and reasonable manner. While I support efforts to make our skies safe, an overwhelming majority of the flights described in these regulations are non-chartered, family flights.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns. I look forward to hearing your response and hope that we may work in concert with one another to find a equitable and responsible solution to protecting our citizens while ensuring safe and secure cross border travel.

Sincerely,

STEVE PEARCE
Member of Congress

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