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February 21, 2013

The Honorable Donna Mercado Kim  
President, Hawaii State Senate  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Subject: **Support for S.B. 1221: Flight Schools (Kahele)**

Dear President Kim:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), a not-for-profit organization, represents the general aviation interests of over 400,000 members nationwide, including over 1,100 in Hawaii. Since 1939, AOPA has been committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and development of general aviation as part of our national transportation system. We write to express our strong support for Hawaii Senate Bill 1221.

Senate Bill 1221 is intended to support the advancement of aviation in Hawaii by providing funds for the planned development of aeronautical training programs at Hawaii Community College and the University of Hawaii at Hilo. Fully developed programs of this nature would finally offer young Hawaiians the very best opportunities to pursue successful careers in aviation-as currently afforded to students across the continental United States.

It is important to note that for the past 30 years there has been a slow, steady decline in the number of pilots in the United States that is leading to a significant professional pilot shortage. AOPA has made reversing this trend a top priority and accordingly supports measures, like Senate Bill 1221, to advance the pilot community by providing more readily available and high quality aviation training. Further, Senate Bill 1221 would not only help meet the demand for future aviation professionals in Hawaii and beyond, but it would also, just as importantly, give young Hawaiians equal opportunity and access to this growing field.

Thank you for your consideration in this important matter. Should you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 695-2091 or [john.pfeifer@aopa.org](mailto:john.pfeifer@aopa.org).

Sincerely,

John L. Pfeifer, PE  
Western Pacific Regional Manager

CC: The Honorable Gilbert Kahele, Hawaii State Senate  
General Aviation Counsel of Hawaii