

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 28, 2003

Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

We write regarding an important issue to the citizens of the state of Washington that affects air transportation in the Puget Sound region. We request an evaluation of the need to continue the four Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) in the area issued after September 11, 2001.

There are currently 14 national security-related TFRs throughout the country issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) at the request of the Department of Defense. Four of these are in Washington State's Puget Sound region. These TFRs cause tremendous operational, access and efficiency problems for pilots. For example, pilots can no longer use the Columbia River as a navigation reference without significant deviation. The restrictions negatively impact the arrivals and departures into four airports in the region, and have closed a seaplane base. This has also had an adverse economic impact on aviation businesses.

Over the past five months, the Federal Aviation Administration, in cooperation with the Department of Defense, has successfully eliminated three TFRs, while maintaining appropriate security. In addition, the House of Representatives has called for a review of all TFRs through language included in H.R. 2115, the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill that passed the House on June 11, 2003. We encourage you to begin this review by analyzing the restrictions in the Puget Sound region.

We understand the need to secure our airspace and our country, but ask you to revisit the necessity for each of these TFRs. We appreciate your efforts to enhance our security, and thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


U.S. Representative Rick Larsen


U.S. Representative Jennifer Dunn

Cc: Acting Secretary of the Navy H. T. Johnson