



**AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

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February 8, 2005

Honorable Les Donovan  
Chairman, Senate Transportation Committee  
Kansas State Senate  
State Capitol 120-S  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

VIA FACSIMILE 785-368-6365

Re: SB 184

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the 403,000 members of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) -- including some 5,400 Kansans -- we urge you to reject the radical approach of SB 184. At this time, we do not understand how subjugating the state's independent Division of Aviation under a new multi-modal bureaucracy benefits the state's aviation users or promotes safety and efficiency in the state's airport system.

As a nationwide organization, we have vast experience dealing with the governance of state aviation programs. Kansas, which is perhaps the nation's leading state in terms of aviation tradition and history, has successfully managed its independent aviation division for more than a quarter century through unprecedented change in the industry: airline deregulation, the crisis in general aviation manufacturing, and the impacts of 9-11. Your system has become a model for other states, and we do not believe changing it overnight benefits Kansas pilots, residents or the state's communities.

At the same time, we urge your committee to use this opportunity to begin studying ways to improve the state's aviation infrastructure by creating a reliable funding source for airports to maximize their safety and efficiency. Investing in runways, airport lighting, safety zones and other tangible, real-world benefits, we believe, better serves Kansas taxpayers than does shifting boxes on a state government organizational chart.

Again, we urge you not advance SB 184, and we stand ready to assist you in whatever ways possible to continue keeping Kansas the nation's aviation leader. AOPA's Midwest Regional Representative Bob Dickens or I would be pleased to discuss this further at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Roger Cohen  
VP-Regional Affairs