



## AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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April 19, 2005

The Honorable Tony Grindburg  
Senate President Pro Tempore  
State Capitol  
600 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0360

**Re: HCR 3060**

Dear Senate President Pro Tempore Grindburg:

I am writing on behalf of the 1,360 North Dakota members – of more than 404,000 nationwide – of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) to urge you to carefully review the role general aviation plays in your state prior to acting on HCR 3060. If all North Dakota airspace were to be dedicated exclusively for military training initiatives, there would be widespread and substantial negative impacts to civil aviation economic activity within the State and to the dozens of communities that depend on general aviation.

Particularly in a geographically expansive state such as North Dakota, general aviation is a fundamental cornerstone to the state's economy. Indeed, to a very large extent, general aviation has enabled small communities and rural populations to enter the mainstream of global commerce by linking such communities with worldwide population, manufacturing, and cultural centers. Fundamentally, general aviation touches nearly every aspect of the lives of North Dakota residents, and in many areas without commercial service or even an advanced highway system, general aviation may represent the only means of civil transportation. Its success will, to a great degree, shape the North Dakota economy in the coming decades

Special Use Airspace (SUA) initiatives to establish additional military aircraft training areas have the potential to negatively impact many of the key economic benefits of general aviation mentioned above. The Air Force is currently proposing the North Dakota Airspace Initiative, which intends to establish Military Operations Areas (MOA) over the *entire* State of North Dakota. The proposed MOA would encompass more than 54,000 square miles above 10,000 feet and will result in severe negative impacts to all air traffic operating within the State of North Dakota. Such an MOA will effectively restrict the airspace above the State and severely limit or even eliminate the economic benefit of civil aviation activity.

AOPA recognizes the desire for the North Dakota Legislature to support the training objective of the Department of Defense to maintain a combat mission ready force.

The Honorable Tony Grindburg

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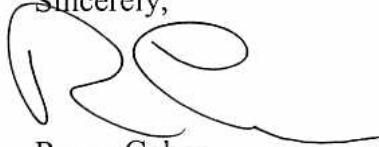
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However, the full scope of the economic impacts and safety issues associated with SUA recommendations need to be addressed publicly before moving forward with such a major recommendation for large scale military airspace complexes.

Thank you for your consideration and we stand ready to assist you in working towards a future in which both the needs of general aviation and the military in North Dakota can be met safely, efficiently and to the benefit of the citizens of the state.

Should you have any questions or require any further information, please contact Bill Hamilton, AOPA's Central Regional Representative, at (970) 887-2101 or me at (301) 695-2200.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RC' with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger Cohen  
Vice President  
Regional Affairs