



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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December 15, 2005

Honorable Julian M. Carroll
Room 229, Capitol Annex
Frankfort, KY 40601

Re: AOPA Opposition to Senate Resolution 66

Dear Senator Carroll:

On behalf of the 3,920 Kentucky members – of the more than 406,000 nationwide – of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), we are writing in opposition to your SR 66, which requests the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to examine flight paths to the Capital City Airport and restrict air traffic around the grounds of the Kentucky State Capitol Building.

In a recent television interview with WKYT-27 you suggested that terrorists finding difficulty reaching the United States' urban centers might be looking for areas in our country more opportune for their "bad deeds." Fortunately, there is neither a credible threat nor an ongoing security concern posed by general aviation to support this speculation. Turning Frankfort into a "no fly zone" would effectively – and unnecessarily – close the Capital City Airport. It would unfairly ground law abiding general aviation pilots and hurt the local and out of town small businesses that utilize the airport, cutting off the economic benefits that the airport provides to Frankfort and the surrounding communities.

Though we oppose your resolution, we share your views about the importance of general aviation (GA) security, and are pleased to provide you with the following overview of GA security and the steps taken by the GA community and the federal government regarding security at the nation's general aviation airports.

The U.S. government has determined that GA is not a significant threat

Since the September 11, 2001, attacks, general aviation has been closely reviewed. In November 2004, the federal government recognized in a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report on general aviation security that "the small size, lack of fuel capacity, and minimal destructive power of most general aviation aircraft make them unattractive to terrorists and, thereby, reduce the possibility of threat associated with their misuse."

The report found that most of the airports GAO visited had, on their own initiative, established a number of security enhancements, using either airport revenue or state or

federal grant money to fund some of the enhancements. The report concluded that continued partnerships between the general aviation industry and the government, such as AOPA's Airport Watch program, are vital to the long-term success of efforts to enhance security at the nation's general aviation landing facilities.

The GA industry has voluntarily taken positive steps to enhance security

AOPA, in cooperation with the federal Transportation Security Administration (TSA), has implemented the Airport Watch Program enlisting the help of the more than 650,000 general aviation pilots to watch for and report suspicious activities at the nation's airports. Modeled after the successful Neighborhood Watch programs, AOPA's Airport Watch provides a national, toll-free hotline (866-GA-SECURE), staffed by the TSA. The Airport Watch Program includes warning signs for airports, informational literature, and training DVD to educate pilots and airport employees how to enhance the security of their aircraft and airports.

AOPA in conjunction with the TSA has mailed the Airport Watch brochure to all pilots. Additionally, AOPA has partnered with officials in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Michigan, Tennessee, and New Jersey to mail state-specific Airport Watch materials to pilots and airport managers in those states. Early next year, AOPA will be mailing updated Airport Watch materials to our now 406,000 members nationwide. We are working once again with the TSA to deliver the new materials to the nation's pilot population.

General Aviation airports are secure by their nature

A general aviation airport is a small neighborhood. Most people on the airport know each other; suspicious activities are noticed. An AOPA survey of airports across the nation found that most had taken voluntary action appropriate to the facility, including the implementation of ID checks, improved fencing, stationing of law enforcement personnel on the field, etc. Since 9/11, pilots and others at airports have stepped up their vigilance, and report their suspicions to authorities. GA pilots are proactively improving security by participating in AOPA's Airport Watch Program.

Hijackers are not likely to gain access to a GA aircraft

General aviation aircraft are used for personal and business transportation, just like an automobile. Unlike a commercial airline, the pilot knows the handful of passengers on his plane and what they are carrying. Personal vigilance is the most effective security.

GA aircraft are rarely stolen

An aircraft is a high-value item. Even a simple, 30-year-old aircraft can be worth \$40,000 or more. Owners take reasonable precautions to protect that investment; an early 2005 survey of AOPA members shows that 91% secure their aircraft from theft or unauthorized use.

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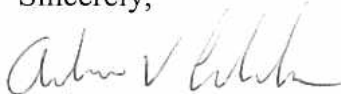
Historically, fewer than a dozen general aviation aircraft a year are stolen, and the number of GA aircraft stolen is down sharply since the general aviation community has taken steps to enhance security. In 2002, 13 GA aircraft, mostly single engine piston aircraft, were stolen. Fewer than half that, six aircraft, were stolen in 2003: five light single engine aircraft and one medium twin-engine aircraft: *this out of a nationwide fleet of approximately 220,000 registered GA aircraft.*

We hope that this information has demonstrated that general aviation poses no threat to the Frankfort Capitol area and we request that you withdraw SR 66 from consideration.

Should you wish to learn more about general aviation and AOPA, please contact AOPA Southeastern Regional Representative Bob Minter at (865) 908-9372. We look forward to working with you, the Legislature, and the entire Commonwealth to keep Kentucky's general aviation airports safe and secure.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Andrew V. Cebula

Senior Vice President

Government and Technical Affairs

cc: Paul Steely, Kentucky Aviation Commissioner
Bob Minter, AOPA Southeastern Regional Representative