



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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April 8, 2005

Assembly Member Jackie Goldberg
Chair
Assembly Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 2003
Sacramento, CA 94249-0045

Re: **Support for AB 1358 (Mullin)**

Dear Madame Chair:

We are writing on behalf of the more than 404,000 members – some 50,000 in California – of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) to respectfully request your committee's support for AB 1358. This measure would require charter schools to provide the State Department of Education written notice of the proposed acquisition of a new school site if the proposed site is within two miles of an airport runway. This would impose the same requirement on charter schools that all other public schools must currently follow.

There are numerous and compelling reasons not to place schools within two miles of an existing airport. The current state law for applicable reviews of proposed school locations within two miles of an airport runway or potential airport runway is good public policy, a policy designed to protect the interests of the local community, the airport, but most of all, the students and staff at the proposed school.

Some have argued – most recently regarding the siting last year of an elementary school less than 2,000 feet from the Oxnard Airport in Ventura County – that the risk of aircraft accidents in such areas are low. Generally, we agree that the risks are, indeed, low. ***However, the key issue is not the magnitude of the risk, but rather of the consequences of an accident occurring at all.*** We believe that it is preferable public policy to completely avoid the risk, if at all possible, rather than to minimize it. Therefore, we respectfully urge your committee to support AB 1358.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Should you have any questions or concerns, or should you require any further information, please contact AOPA's California Regional Representative, John Pfeifer, at (530) 226-5117 or me at (301) 695-2200.

Sincerely,

Roger Cohen
Vice President, Regional Affairs

Cc: Assembly Member Gene Mullin
R. Austin Wiswell, Chief, Division of Aeronautics
John Pfeifer, AOPA California Regional Representative
Wesley J. Lujan, Advocacy, Inc.