



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION  
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**Phil Boyer**  
President

August 17, 2006

Mr. Todd J. Zinser  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
400 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Room 9210  
Washington, DC 20590

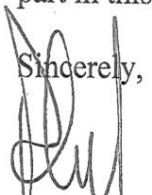
Dear Mr. Zinser:

Following up our conversation from last week, I am expressing the extreme disappointment of the more than 408,000 members of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) over the loss of a U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General (OIG) laptop computer containing the names of almost 43,000 Florida residents holding airmen certificates. The theft of the computer from a government vehicle late last month is alarming because it contained a database with personal information, including social security numbers, putting these pilots at great risk of identify theft and other potential crimes.

Since the initial details were released, AOPA members have expressed outrage that such sensitive personal information would be left unsecured. Ironically, the FAA considers this important enough that it has taken steps to protect pilots' identities by allowing individual pilots to remove their social security number from their pilot certificate and replace it with a new airman identification number. The FAA also removed partial social security number and partial pilot certificate number search capabilities on its Airmen Inquiry Web site to further protect pilots' privacy rights. This underscores the need for your office to protect pilots from this information being compromised.

I strongly urge you to take the necessary steps to recover the laptop and prevent this type of security breach from being repeated in the future. Also, in the spirit of our phone call last week, let me continue to offer our assistance from AOPA in any manner possible to communicate to our Florida members the actions needed on their part in this matter.

Sincerely,



Phil Boyer