



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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March 2, 2006

Honorable Biagio Ciotto
Honorable Antonio Guerrero
Co-Chairmen
Transportation Committee
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Support for SB 520 (Aviation sales and use tax exemptions)

Dear Co-Chairmen:

On behalf of the close to 5,000 Connecticut members – of more than 407,000 nationwide – of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), we are writing to express our strong support for SB 520, which exempts service, sales, and equipment used in aviation from the state's sales and use tax.

By its nature, aviation does not recognize state lines. Aircraft owners living close to border states with more favorable tax environments frequently choose to purchase their aircraft in those states. Not only does Connecticut's unfavorable tax environment keep aircraft sales tax revenue out of Connecticut, but also the revenue generated by the storage and service of those aircraft in neighboring states. To stay competitive, many states across the country have provided relief from aircraft sales, service, and property taxes and have experienced an increase in aviation related economic activity.

The lighter, general aviation aircraft our members typically fly are greater in number than all other aircraft, and this new pool of customers would increase significantly the amount of aviation business conducted in Connecticut. Moreover, with more customers, aviation businesses will be able to provide many highly skilled, well-paying jobs, generating broad tax and social benefits statewide.

Given the economic good sense this makes for our members, aircraft sales and repair businesses and employees, and the residents of Connecticut, we strongly urge your committee to pass SB 520.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact AOPA's Northeast Regional Representative, Craig Dotlo, at (914) 631-4051.

Sincerely,

Owen M. Sweeney, Jr.
Manager, State & Local Government Affairs

cc: Stephen E. Korta, II, Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Craig Dotlo, AOPA Northeast Regional Representative