



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

421 Aviation Way • Frederick, MD 21701-4798
Telephone (301) 695-2000 • FAX (301) 695-2375
www.aopa.org

February 5, 2003

Docket Management System
U.S. Department of Transportation
Room Plaza 401
400 Seventh St. S.W.
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Re: FAA Docket FAA-2003-14246
Airport Privatization Pilot Program
Notice of receipt of application –
New Orleans Lakefront Airport
New Orleans, Louisiana

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of over 392,000 members nationwide with over 11,000 operating in the geographic area around New Orleans Lakefront Airport. AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and development of general aviation airports and their facilities on behalf of our membership.

On January 16, 2003, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) published in the Federal Register, Volume 68, Number 11, pages 2391-2392, "Notice of receipt of application of New Orleans Lakefront Airport, New Orleans, Louisiana; commencement of 60 day public review and comment period." The Association is in the process of studying and analyzing the proposal currently before the Federal Aviation Administration concerning the above referenced notice.

The authority provided to the FAA in granting exemptions under Title 49 U.S.C §47134 from certain statutory and regulatory requirements for the Airport Privatization Pilot Program, especially as these relate to use of airport revenue, have far reaching implications for not only the airport but also its users.

We believe that providing a 60-day window for comments by interested parties is not an adequate amount of time to allow us to conduct the appropriate research analysis and to develop substantive input on this proposal. In fact, the FAA has taken much more than this amount of time to review the submission prior to publication in the Federal Register.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Page 2
February 5, 2003

Therefore, AOPA formally requests a 60-day extension to the comment period for FAA-2003-14246. We have determined that this additional time is necessary for us to request and collect additional relevant information concerning the above notice and provide our in-depth comments to the docket. The lack of availability of a complete package as listed in the docket notice delayed our ability to begin our analysis for more than one week.

Our initial review of available information published to this docket revealed a number of areas that raise numerous questions and significant concern regarding the accuracy of some information provided to the FAA in the application process. We believe these must be fully investigated and resolved before the Association files comments.

This issue is of vital importance to our members and may well set the stage for other applications for participation in the program. The impact of the FAA's decision in this matter will have far reaching impacts that must be explored fully.

We feel certain that the Agency has the desire to guarantee this proposal has received a full and fair airing before issuing a determination on the application by New Orleans Lakefront Airport. Granting an extension to the comment period will allow this to occur.

If you have any questions pertaining to our request, please contact me directly at (301) 695-2221.

Sincerely,



Andrew V. Cebula
Senior Vice President
Government and Technical Affairs

cc: Mr. David Bennett
Mr. Kevin Willis