

The Honorable Barbara Boxer via Fax: (202) 224-0454
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Max Trescott
3405 Ridgemoor Drive
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Dear Madam Senator,

I'm the 2008 National Certificated Flight Instructor of the Year, selected by the general aviation industry to represent the 92,000 flight instructors in the U.S. I believe our views on this issue are mirrored by the 590,000 pilots in the country. As a member of the aviation subcommittee of the Senate Commerce, Science and Technology committee, and as a former Chair of the House Subcommittee on Government Activities and Transportation, I know that you are well versed in aviation issues. I would like to request your action on an issue crucial to maintaining a robust general aviation industry.

We are very concerned by the TSA's Large Aircraft Security Program proposal, initiated during the last administration, for which comments close on February 27. In our view, the proposal represents the worst of government in action: it provides no increase in security, takes away the freedom of pilots to fly when and where they choose and does so at cost of \$1.9 billion, to be borne by pilots and operators.

The proposal is based on the premise that small aircraft could be used by terrorists as missiles. Yet the government has already spent millions and concluded that our nuclear facilities are safe from aircraft used as missiles. As you know, the terrorist weapon of choice has been rental trucks, which have many times the weight carrying capacity of small aircraft.

The proposal says "At this time, TSA cannot quantify these benefits." Nonetheless, they include planes as small as 12,500 pounds because "TSA has concluded in this NPRM that the security benefits of the lower weight threshold of 12,500 pounds are justified by the risk..."

The proposal does not recognize the differences between the capabilities, mission and economics of the airlines and general aviation and "is proposing one security program that would apply to all large aircraft operators" for both the airlines and general aviation.

General aviation is inherently different. The people who fly on board these planes are known to the pilot and the aircraft do not have the capability to inflict serious damage. Over 3,000 comments have been filed at regulations.gov and all that I've read oppose the program.

May I ask you to remind TSA that this administration believes that we can achieve both security AND freedom. And that any program which takes away freedom, but can't quantify any additional security benefits is inconsistent with that philosophy. This program makes no sense in the best of economic times; it's totally counterproductive in these times. Please don't let "National Security" become a smokescreen that's used to justify any and all programs without regard to their benefits.

Sincerely,



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