

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 1, 2005

The Honorable Christopher Bond
Chairman
Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies Appropriations
Subcommittee
130 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies Appropriations
Subcommittee
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Bond and Ranking Member Murray:

We are writing to request that you not include \$150 million in the FY 2006 Transportation, Treasury, Judiciary, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill as requested by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to implement the privatization of Flight Service Stations.

On February 1, 2005, the Federal Aviation Administration announced that operations conducted by Flight Service Stations would be performed by a private contractor. As part of the privatization, the contractor will eliminate 38 of the 58 stations across the country, and will consolidate Flight Service Station responsibilities at the remaining 20 stations. For your information, we have enclosed a list of the stations affected by the proposed consolidation.

General aviation pilots depend on Flight Service Stations to provide weather briefings, temporary flight restrictions, emergency information, and aid in search and rescue. Flight Service Station Specialists use their expertise of regional weather, landscape, and flight conditions to ensure pilots reach their destinations safely. Their work has kept general aviation running smoothly and has literally saved lives.

The Federal Aviation Administration's proposal will lead to decreased safety for pilots of small planes because they will no longer be talking to personnel familiar with regional weather and topography. The consolidated system will strain service capability because fewer employees will be responsible for a growing system of general air traffic.

The proposed plan will be especially harmful to rural areas that more heavily rely upon smaller aircraft. Whether moving products and services as part of the global economy, or shepherding sick patients for medical care, communities require a basic air infrastructure network. By ensuring that Flight Service Stations can continue to serve all areas, general

Under the privatization proposal, 38 Flight Service Stations will be closed, leaving the responsibility for a growing general aviation system to 3 larger Hub Sites and 17 Legacy Sites. Over 1,000 highly-trained employees will be lost, making this one of the largest privatization efforts ever conducted.

Facilities scheduled to be closed:

AL	Anniston	ME	Bangor	PA	Altoona
AR	Jonesboro	MO	St. Louis	PA	Williamsport
CA	Hawthorne	MS	Greenwood	SC	Anderson
CA	Rancho Murrieta	MT	Great Falls	SD	Huron
CA	Riverside	ND	Grand Forks	TN	Jackson
CT	Bridgeport	NE	Columbus	TX	Conroe
FL	Gainesville	NJ	Millville	TX	San Angelo
IA	Fort Dodge	NV	Reno	UT	Cedar City
ID	Boise	NY	Buffalo	VT	Burlington
IN	Terre Haute	OH	Cleveland	WI	Green Bay
KS	Wichita	OH	Dayton	WV	Elkins
KY	Louisville	OK	McAlester	WY	Casper
LA	DeRidder	OR	McMinnville		

Hub Facilities:

AZ	Prescott
TX	Fort Worth
VA	Dulless

Legacy Facilities:

CA	Oakland	MN	Princeton
CA	San Diego	MO	Columbia
CO	Denver	NC	Raleigh Durham
FL	Miami	NM	Albuquerque
FL	St. Petersburg	NY	Islip
GA	Macon	PR	San Juan
HI	Honolulu	TN	Nashville
IL	Kankakee	WA	Seattle
MI	Lansing		