

# GENERAL AVIATION NEWS

## [Mayors denounce attacks on GA](#)

[Janice Wood](#) | [News](#) | September 27, 2011

The Alliance for Aviation Across America today released a letter from 77 mayors in 44 different states to President Obama expressing concern about recent mischaracterizations of general aviation, as well as new, proposed tax burdens that would decimate small businesses and organizations around the country that depend on GA.

On a press call with reporters, mayors from Ohio, Kansas and Virginia highlighted the critical importance of GA to the economy, which supports over 1.2 million jobs and \$150 billion in economic impact. Participants also highlighted the role of general aviation and small airports in supporting local employers and jobs, and providing access to a host of important services and resources, including medical care, law enforcement, disaster relief, mail delivery, fire fighting and flight training.

The full text of the letter is below:

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our deep concern that your comments about general aviation in recent weeks and months have not only mischaracterized these aircraft and their crucial importance for our economy, but have suggested that the businesses and communities that depend on this form of transportation can afford an increased tax burden for general aviation operators. On behalf of over 77 communities in 44 states, we write to let you know that for thousands of towns and communities like ours around the country, general aviation is a vital part of our economy and national infrastructure, and we are extremely concerned about the repercussions of your statements on this important lifeline to communities around the nation.

General aviation supports 1.2 million American jobs, over \$150 billion in economic impact annually, and is a vital economic engine for our national economy. However, it is also a struggling industry – in just the first six months of 2011, there has been a 15.5% drop in general aviation aircraft shipments, and billings for general aviation have dropped 22.3%. Since 2008, manufacturers have also laid off roughly 20,000 workers, which is additionally concerning given that the general aviation industry remains one of the only sectors in U.S. manufacturing that still contributes positively to the balance of trade.

In addition, general aviation aircraft and the airports they utilize are a literal lifeline to our communities, providing access for business growth, law enforcement, disaster relief, medical care and other services. They are utilized to help transport blood and organs to residents in rural communities, reunite veterans back from overseas with their families, and help our companies to reach customers in markets that otherwise could not be reached.

As you know well, the vast majority of businesses and organizations that own and utilize general aviation are not wealthy CEOs. Rather, 85% are small to mid-sized businesses and organizations that rely on these aircraft to reach far-off plants and customers, serve rural markets without access to commercial aviation, or deliver medical care and other services. We can tell you firsthand that these aircraft are a crucial tool and resource for businesses in our communities; businesses that keep our communities afloat and help workers to be able to continue to put food on their table for their families.

Also concerning to us is the recent discussion of new “user fee” taxes on general aviation aircraft operators. These taxes would mean not only an additional tax burden, but a huge administrative burden on businesses, farms and organizations that use general aviation and that would have to literally keep track of invoices for fees for thousands of takeoffs and landings. In addition, at a time when our government is supposed to be finding ways to reduce government spending, we do not understand why some in Congress seek to create huge, new bureaucracy within the FAA to administer these new taxes. At such a vulnerable time for our economy, we need to be doing everything we can to support jobs and help to stimulate our economy, not crippling an important industry which represents a lifeline to communities such as ours around the nation. We stand ready to work with you on this and all issues related to local communities around the nation.

Sincerely,

- Mayor Debbie Garrett – Stroud, OK
- Mayor Marvin Belcher – Huntingburg, IN
- Mayor Leo Marshall – Salmon, ID
- Mayor Vern P. Powers – Hastings, NE
- Mayor Elaine Horn – Sedalia, MO
- Mayor Godfrey – Ogden City, UT
- Mayor Dick Kirchoff Le Mars, IA
- Mayor Carl Brewer – Wichita, KS
- Mayor J. Scott Padgett – Concord, NC
- Mayor Christopher J. Shannon – Bay City, MI
- Mayor Stan Skipworth – Corona, CA
- Mayor Carl Shaff – Independence, IA
- Mayor Jim Thatcher – Clay Center, KS
- Mayor Marsha Mitchell – Centerville, IA
- Mayor James A. Erb – Charles City, IA
- Mayor Charles L. Hardy Jr. – Commerce, GA
- Mayor Jim Conley – Blairsville, GA
- Mayor Ronnie A. Dixon – Vidalia, GA
- Mayor Rudy Wright – Hickory, NC
- Mayor Brian Roth – Plymouth, NC
- Mayor Charles C. Farrior, Jr. – Wallace, NC
- Mayor Michael E. Fincher – Logansport, IN
- Mayor Herbert H. Arihood – Rensselaer, IN
- Mayor Ernest B. Wiggins – Warsaw, IN
- Mayor Ken Miyagishima – Las Cruces, NM
- Mayor William E. Johnson, III (City Manager) – Petersburg, VA
- Mayor Gus Raymond Alborn – Ruidoso, NM

- Mayor Lisa Wong – Fitchburg, MA
- Mayor Chris Gibbs – Safford, AZ
- Mayor William F. Scanlon Jr. – Beverly, MA
- Mayor James P. Council, III – Franklin, VA
- Mayor Neil Segotta – Raton, NM
- Mayor Jay Jaxson, Jr. – Eufaula, AL
- Mayor Gene Robinson – Anniston, AL
- Mayor Willard Wright – Quinwood, WV
- Mayor Tommy Irwin – Corinth, MS
- Mayor Kerry W. Hill – Ripley, MS
- Mayor Nan Gorman – Hazard, KY
- Mayor Tim Walker – Elizabethtown, KY
- Mayor LeRoy Goodman – Fernley, NV
- Mayor Charles Sammarone – Youngstown, OH
- Mayor Jim Kight – Troutdale, OR
- Mayor Paul Grenier – Berlin, NH
- Mayor Verne E. Rupright – Wasilla, AK
- Mayor Daniel Guerrero – San Marcos, TX
- Mayor Roger Van Horn – Nacogdoches TX
- Mayor Mary Janacaro – Hensleigh – Whitehall, MT
- Mayor Marianne Maynard – Stuttgart, AR
- Mayor Michael J. O'Brien, Warren, OH
- Mayor James. P. Swoger – East Liverpool, OH
- Mayor Stephen Smith – Pinedale, WY
- Mayor James Brown – Rome, NY
- Mayor Richard P. Vilello Jr – Lock Haven, PA
- Mayor Val Truelsen – Dolores, CO
- Mayor Michelle Black – Mancos, CO
- Mayor Dan Porter – Cortez, CO
- Mayor Timothy A. Helbling – Mandan, ND
- Mayor Nicholas J. Helmer – Prospect Heights, IL
- Mayor Knox H. White – Greenville, SC
- Mayor Don Godbey- Mauldin, SC
- Mayor Alan Larson – Schaumburg, IL
- Mayor Nancy Adams – Pequot Lakes, MN
- Mayor Christopher Meyer – Marshfield, WI
- Mayor Robert Apgar – DeLand, FL
- Mayor Robert C. Willey – Easton, MD
- Mayor Margaret Larson – Arlington, WA
- Mayor Robert Goedde – Chelan, WA
- Mayor Joe Scholtz – St. Louis, MO
- Mayor Dave McGirr – Huron, SD
- Mayor David Hahn – Wall, SD
- Mayor John F. Hart – Philip, SD
- Mayor Glen Haines – Faith, SD
- Mayor Thomas Lauzon – Barre, VT

- Mayor Norm Archibald – Abilene, TX
- Mayor Robert A. Myer – New Roads, LA
- Mayor Bill Robertson – Minden, LA
- Eugene J. Conlogue, Town Manager, Millinocket, Maine