



**AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

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**Phil Boyer**  
President

March 20, 2008

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Governor of Arizona  
1700 West Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Napolitano:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of more than 415,000 pilots nationwide, including 12,330 in Arizona. I am writing to express our concerns with the proposed budget cuts to the Aeronautics Division of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

ADOT's recommendation to cut \$15 million from the aeronautics budget goes far beyond fairness to the state's aviation community. Aviation represents only one half of one percent (.05%) of the ADOT budget. Astoundingly, it is being asked to contribute more than 67% of ADOT's contribution toward a budget solution under the administration's proposal and more than 43% under the legislative proposal. This sweep of nearly all the annual income from the state aviation fund is an unfair burden on a critical part of the state's infrastructure. I urge you to reconsider this approach and seek a solution that does not have so negative and disproportionate an effect on Arizona aviation.

Such dramatic cuts in aviation spending may mitigate the state's short-term budget problems, but this temporary relief will be offset in the future by unrealized economic gains due to neglect of the aviation system. Properly managed, investment in aviation can bring a big return to the state. In fact, a recent study conducted for ADOT indicates that aviation is a powerful engine for economic activity and for tax revenue. Note that, while Arizona aviation generates about \$1.8 billion annually in tax revenue, less than 1% of that revenue is allocated to the Aeronautics Division. By any standard, this is a terrific return on the state's investment! I encourage you to review this study, which can be found at [http://www.azdot.gov/aviation/library/pdf/Economic\\_Impact\\_of\\_Aviation\\_in\\_AZ\\_02-03.pdf](http://www.azdot.gov/aviation/library/pdf/Economic_Impact_of_Aviation_in_AZ_02-03.pdf).

General aviation provides vital services to businesses, individuals, families, churches, hospitals, and colleges throughout Arizona. It is crucial to the state's economy and public safety that these airports remain open and accessible through proper funding at the state and federal level. There are 6,438 aircraft currently based at Arizona's 78 public use airports making an important contribution to the state's economy.

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Thank you for your consideration of our concerns and your years of support for aviation in Arizona. We believe that with your continuing commitment, general aviation can play an ever-increasing role in Arizona's prosperity. In the meantime, if you or your staff have any questions or would like to discuss this matter personally, please do not hesitate to contact me or our Western Regional Representative, Ms. Stacy Howard, who can be reached at 480-987 9165.

Sincerely,



Phil Boyer

cc: ADOT Director Victor Mendez  
ADOT Aeronautics Director Barclay Dick  
Stacy Howard, AOPA Western Regional Representative