



421 Aviation Way
Frederick, Maryland 21701

T. 301-695-2000
F. 301-695-2375

www.aopa.org

April 20, 2011

The Honorable Eric Garcetti
President, Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street, Room 470
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Santa Monica Airport Resolution - #11-0002-S28

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of more than 50,000 California members – of more than 400,000 nationwide – of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), we are writing to register our opposition to Council Resolution 11-000-S28. This legislation purports to be aimed at enhancing safety by authorizing representatives of the City of Los Angeles to seek federal restrictions on legitimate aeronautical activities being conducted at Santa Monica Airport.

Over many years, the airport has compiled an impressive safety record. Additionally, many operational limitations have been adopted to minimize its effect on the surrounding community, including departure curfews, alternate departure routes and maximum noise levels that in effect prohibit certain aircraft from using the airport. The Federal Aviation Administration has essentially held out a blank check to construct additional safety infrastructure, but the City of Santa Monica's intransigence has kept these improvements from moving forward. A sincere concern for public safety would seek to encourage and implement these safety procedures rather than engage in political posturing. It should also be acknowledged that the cities of Los Angeles and Santa Monica bear the responsibility for having allowed residential development to overrun safety areas and buffer zones, despite long held best practices for appropriate land use around airports.

The Santa Monica Airport is one of the oldest continuously operating airports in Los Angeles County, operating since 1917. Since that time, it has grown into one of the nation's most important general aviation airports. It makes a significant contribution to the economy and transportation system of the greater Los Angeles area. In these economically challenging times, the sponsors of this resolution are showing a callous disregard for the many people and business whose livelihoods depend on this airport.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments. We recognize that this is a contentious issue in the community, and it is difficult to conduct a thoughtful and reasonable discussion of the future of this important airport. We encourage the Los Angeles City Council to pause and think before this action, and instead participate with other stakeholders in a thoughtful examination of the airport's real conditions, impact, and value. AOPA would be pleased to take part in such discussions. In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, or should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or Bill Dunn, Vice President of Airport Advocacy at 301-695-2000.

Sincerely,

Gregory Pecoraro
Vice President, Airports and State Advocacy