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July 18, 2011

Honorable Tony Cardenas
Los Angeles City Council District 6
City Hall, Room 455
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Cardenas:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of over 400,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots, including nearly 50,000 in the State of California. AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability, safety and economic development of general aviation airports and their facilities as a vital part of a state and national transportation system and economic development engines.

We are writing to express our serious concern over what we view as a lack of adequate attention by the Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA) organization and the Board of Airport Commissioners (BOAC) to the development and operation of Van Nuys Airport (VNY). For more than fifteen years, AOPA has been actively involved in a number of issues regarding VNY and the needs of general aviation aircraft owners and operators.

Of late, we have watched criticisms of the Los Angeles World Airports organization, the operators of Van Nuys, Ontario, Palmdale and Los Angeles International airports rise to a fever pitch. These criticisms center on LAWA's overall management of the airport system. Right or wrong, the perception is that LAWA's focus is solely LAX-centric, at the expense of the other airports in the system. With an over \$2 billion development project underway, we can understand the need to expend additional energy on managing activity at LAX but not at the expense of other airports in this system. Additionally, VNY is the only airport in this system which exclusively serves general aviation operators. General aviation airports cannot and should not be managed with an airline airport mentality since they are completely different in their needs.

For many years, VNY held bragging rights to being the busiest general aviation airport in the world. Several years ago, VNY lost that claim to Deer Valley Airport in Phoenix, AZ. Like many in the local community surrounding VNY, we believe that Van Nuys Airport simply does not receive the attention necessary to ensure continued efficient development, attraction of business and management, and attention to the legitimate concerns of airport tenants and neighbors since the BOAC does not meet in Van Nuys and is inaccessible to the community on a convenient basis. VNY becomes lost in the LAWA bureaucracy. Even the airport manager at VNY is "part-time" serving both Van Nuys and Ontario Airports.

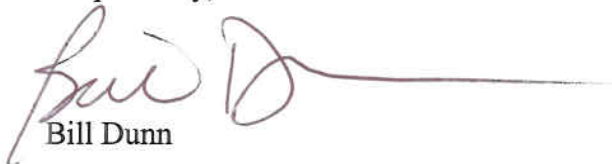
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In one instance in which we have been directly involved, a private developer, who was an approved respondent to an RFP issued by LAWA, has been attempting to obtain a land lease at VNY to construct a multi-million dollar aircraft hangar project. This effort has been ongoing for over 4 years. He has invested significant amounts of personal funds to complete the processes provided to him by LAWA, and despite his significant investment, still has no approved lease and no reliable timeline for a resolution.

It is our opinion that VNY airport is "lost in the noise" of LAWA and the BOAC. While this is understandable under the current governance structure, it is an untenable situation that should be remedied. Therefore, we believe, as do many of the community organizations surrounding VNY in the San Fernando Valley, as well as the aviation community, that the City should give serious consideration to creation and fully vet the possibility of the creation of a VNY Board of Airport Commissioners whose purpose would be solely focused on Van Nuys Airport without the distractions of managing and operating airline airports. We believe that creating a sub-committee of the existing BOAC will not serve the needs of VNY since the focus will remain on airline issues and LAX. Oversight, management, marketing and development of VNY airport must be independent of the decision-making process now in place within LAWA and the BOAC.

We would be pleased to discuss this matter with you further. I may be reached at 301-695-2205.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill Dunn", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bill Dunn

cc: Honorable Eric Garcetti
Los Angeles City Council President