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April 5, 2012

Chair Doug Simons
Grand Junction Regional Airport Authority Board
2828 Walker Field Drive, Suite 301
Grand Junction, CO 81506

Dear Chair Simons and Airport Authority Board Members:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is a not-for-profit membership organization that represents the general aviation interests of over 400,000 members nationwide, including nearly 11,000 in Colorado. Since 1939, AOPA has been committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and economic development of general aviation facilities, without unjust restrictions or discrimination, as a vital part of our state and national transportation system.

Since early 2011, we have been closely following and weighing in on the issues surrounding the security fence realignment at the southeast general aviation area at the Grand Junction Regional Airport (GJT). As you are aware, this realignment has created significant access, operational, and business impacts for many of our members at GJT. While AOPA and our members fully understand the need for adequate aviation security measures, it is also important that such measures minimize operational and financial impacts on general aviation operations, and ensure that users, pilots and airport customers have reasonable access to general aviation facilities.

According to the Colorado Division of Aeronautics' 2008 Statewide Airport Economic Impact Study, general aviation visitors using the Grand Junction Regional Airport annually generate over \$2.7 million in lodging, rental car and sales tax revenues for the Grand Junction community and western Colorado. Clearly, the community has a significant financial stake in solving this issue, and promoting and encouraging a thriving and robust general aviation community at GJT.

To that end, AOPA is pleased that the Grand Junction Regional Airport Board has convened the GJT Security Solutions Committee to recommend an alternative GA security solution for the airport which better meets the needs of airport users and constituents. We have been in contact with our AOPA members on that Committee, and Larry Kempton, our Airport Support Network Volunteer at GJT, and stand ready to assist them as necessary.

AOPA and our members sincerely hope that the Grand Junction City Council, Mesa County Commission, and the GJT Airport Board will give serious consideration to the recommendations of the Security Solutions Committee, and work collaboratively to quickly develop and implement a mutually beneficial solution to the current security fence and access issue. Doing so will benefit general aviation, the City of Grand Junction, Mesa County and the entire economy of western Colorado.

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If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact David Ulane at (301) 695-2094, or Tom Zecha at (301) 695-2211. We look forward to working with the Committee and our members to strongly advocate for a solution that better meets the needs of the general aviation community at GJT.

Sincerely,



David Ulane, A.A.E.
Northwest Mountain Regional Manager



Tom Zecha
Manager, Aviation Security

cc: Mayor Tom Kenyon, City of Grand Junction
Chair Craig Meis, Mesa County Board of Commissioners
Larry Kempton, GJT AOPA Airport Support Network Volunteer
Dr. Dave Shepard, Grand Junction User and Tenants Association