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February 12, 2008

The Honorable John Dougall
Chair, Revenue and Taxation Committee
Utah House of Representatives
The State Capitol
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 415,000 pilots nationwide – including more than 3,500 in Utah. We are writing to express our strong support for House Bill 365.

Airports are a vital part of our nation's transportation system, and a major contributor to the growth and development of a community. You and your community rely upon airports every day to provide vital services to individuals, families, churches, hospitals, colleges, small businesses, and more. From airborne traffic reporting to the overnight shipment of your most recent catalog purchases to finding new sources of energy, airports and airplanes make it possible for you and your community to lead better, safer, healthier, and more productive lives.

The Utah Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics plays a vital role in supporting aviation in the state of Utah. The Division's activities are supported by the state's Aeronautics Restricted Fund. Passage of HB-365 will direct more of the state's aviation related revenue, contributed by aviators, into the Aeronautics Fund for the construction, improvement and maintenance of publicly used airports in the state. Without placing an additional tax burden on Utah citizens, these aviation dollars will benefit Utah's metropolitan and rural communities by providing additional dollars to match federal grants for airports that qualify under the National Plan for an Integrated Airport System (NPIAS), and providing state grants to help airports that do not qualify for federal assistance.

Airports are irreplaceable assets. The health and future of Utah's airport system depends on continuous and increased funding of the State Aeronautics Fund to meet the growing demand for aviation infrastructure in Utah. On behalf of our Utah members, and members across the country, AOPA requests the support of the House Revenue and Taxation Committee for passage of HB-365.

Sincerely,


Gregory Pecoraro
Vice President, Government Affairs