



October 5, 2009

Louis M. Farrell  
Director  
Student & Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
425 I Street, NW Suite 6034  
Washington, D.C. 20536

Dear Mr. Farrell:

The four undersigned aviation associations met today, Monday, October 5, 2009 with seven of the J-1 Flight Schools, the General Aviation Division of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy, and members of your staff to discuss resolution of the J-1 flight training visa issue.

It is our understanding that a senior immigration attorney for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Sarah Kendall, is currently reviewing SEVP policy recommendations for transferring the J-1 program from the State Department to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

As you are aware, we have worked cooperatively with your office and DHS for over a year in an effort to transition this program before the final State Department rule terminates the J-1 program on December 31, 2009. The J-1 schools have reached a critical juncture – if no decision is forthcoming by the end of this month, October 2009, the J-1 schools will likely cease operations in early 2010.

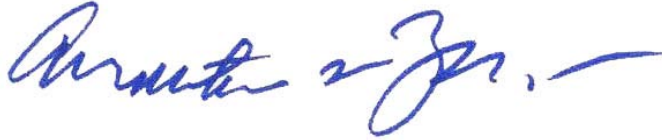
Seven of the original eight J-1 schools have already begun to significantly downsize their operations. It is imperative for DHS to recognize that continuation of a J-1 type flight training program to facilitate curricular practical training to build additional flight hours and proficiency is an integral part of professional flight training and must be preserved in order to properly train and educate quality pilots.

Recognition of the accreditation these seven schools hold with significant FAA and TSA oversight is also important. The standard of academic instruction the current J-1 schools provide for professional flight training as well as their oversight of foreign students while in the U.S. is second to none.

The results of the most recent Helicopter Association International (HAI) survey are attached. We would appreciate your providing the report to Ms. Kendall for her review and consideration as to the dire financial straits the J-1 schools find themselves in. It is hoped that the severe economic crisis facing the remaining seven schools as described therein will be a catalyst for DHS to act.

We trust that DHS will render a decision on this matter before the month is out. We look forward to a follow-on meeting with your staff on Monday, November 2, 2009 to prepare for the next steps.

Sincerely,



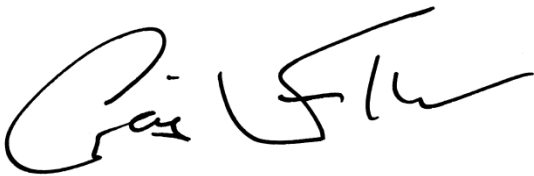
Matthew Zuccaro  
President, Helicopter Association International (HAI)



James K. Coyne  
President, National Air Transportation Association (NATA)



Peter J. Bunce  
President & CEO, General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA)



Craig Fuller  
President & CEO, Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association (AOPA)