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June 11, 2012

The Honorable William Mangham
Supervisor, Whitefish Township
7052 North M-123
Paradise, MI 49768

Dear Supervisor Mangham:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association is a not-for-profit membership organization that represents the general aviation interests of over 400,000 members nationwide. Since 1939, AOPA has been committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as a part of our national transportation system. We write to express our support for the establishment of a new general aviation airport near Paradise, Michigan.

As you know, general aviation airports make up not only a vital component of the state and national air transportation systems, but also directly serve the critical needs of community members and local businesses alike. To illustrate the importance of general aviation across the country, the Federal Aviation Administration recently published its study entitled *General Aviation Airports: A National Asset*. This report outlined many of the ways in which general aviation airports serve a critical role in their community, state, and country.

Emergency preparedness and response is one of the leading roles that general aviation airports support. These airports provide support facilities for aeromedical evacuation, airborne law enforcement, aerial firefighting, and disaster relief operations that simply cannot be supported by other means. Given the recent Duck Lake fire, the importance of airborne law enforcement flights, which discovered the fire, and aerial firefighting operations which helped slow the fire's growth are without question critically important to the region. Having an additional airport to support these operations not only helps to protect the immediate area surrounding the airport, but also the entire Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

General aviation airports also provide critical community access via air taxi, charter flights, and personally-operated aircraft to remote populations and islands with few other transportation options. While the Paradise area is certainly accessible by automobile, few land-based ingress and egress options from the region necessitates the establishment of a community airport to provide area residents, tourists, and others with complimentary transportation options while not relying on any one mode.

A potential Paradise-area airport may also support many other economically sustaining commercial and industrial activities. These activities may include agricultural applications and plantings, aerial surveying, mineral exploration, utility control and inspection, express delivery service, flight training, and business flights. Given the relative remoteness of the Upper Peninsula, many of these types of operations likely rely on general aviation and community airports to efficiently conduct their business. As regional commercial activity and tourism experiences a resurgence, a well-placed general aviation airport will only serve to further drive growth of the region in which it serves and the statewide economic impact of general aviation that currently totals more than \$4.1 billion annually.

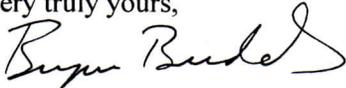
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On behalf of the more than 10,500 AOPA members and approximately 15,000 pilots in Michigan, please accept our gratitude for your consideration of establishing a new general aviation airport in Paradise. While I am unable attend the meeting discussing the potential construction of a new general aviation airport near Paradise due to a schedule conflict, please know that I and our more than 400,000 members across the country look forward to the creation of an industry leading general aviation airport in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Should you at any point require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bryan Budds".

Bryan Budds

Great Lakes Regional Manager