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June 14, 2012

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg  
President Pro Tempore  
California State Senate  
State Capitol  
10<sup>th</sup> & L Streets  
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: Opposition to SB 1005 and AB 1465

Dear President Pro Tempore Steinberg:

On behalf of nearly 50,000 California members, of more than 400,000 nationwide, of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), we are writing to register our opposition to certain provisions of both SB 1005 and AB 1465.

We have just learned that both SB 1005 and AB 1465 were amended yesterday to include provisions that would transfer the excise taxes on aviation fuels from the aeronautics account to the general fund for the next three fiscal years. The excise tax on general aviation gasoline and jet fuel are the sole source of funds for the California Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics and the airport grant programs that it administers. These programs are vital to the safety, maintenance and development of California's airports.

A 2003 State of California economic impact study attributed nine percent of the state gross product and nine percent of the state's jobs to aviation. In 2005, a study sponsored by the National Association of State Aviation Officials found that general aviation contributed more than \$150 billion annually to the national economy and \$18 billion to the economy of California. While funds to support and develop the state's airport system come from a variety of sources, the state's own aeronautics program is a vital and essential source of an integral part of the system. The sole funding source for state aeronautics programs must be protected and dedicated to that purpose.

We urge you to reject the provisions of both these bills that would divert user generated funds from the aeronautics account to the general fund.

If you or your staff has any questions, please call Mr. John Pfeifer, AOPA Western Pacific Regional Manager, at 530-226-5117.

Sincerely,

Gregory Pecoraro  
Vice President  
Airports and State Advocacy