The Honorable Barack Obama  
President  
United States of America  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

March 12, 2012

Dear President Obama,

As members of the Senate General Aviation Caucus, we write in opposition to the Administration’s Fiscal Year 2013 Budget proposal to establish a new $100 user fee on certain General Aviation (GA) users.

The Administration’s proposal would bypass the existing per-gallon system and create a new bureaucratic regime within the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to collect a new user fee. We believe the per-gallon tax assessed on aviation gasoline and jet fuel is the most efficient and effective way to generate revenue from aviation users.

We are concerned a new user fee like the one described in the Administration’s budget proposal may create a disincentive for pilots and aircraft to use air traffic control services or fly in controlled airspace. Controlled airspace exists around virtually every public use airport regardless of whether there is an air traffic control facility present. By discouraging ATC use, this proposal may inadvertently create a less safe aviation environment.

As you are aware, Congress recently passed and you signed into law a comprehensive, multi-year FAA Reauthorization bill (P.L. 112-95). This bipartisan bill was able to pass Congress in part because it did not assess new user fees on GA. We urge you to consider using the FAA Reauthorization as a framework for funding our nation’s aviation system.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

Sen. Mark Begich  
Co-Chair, Senate GA Caucus

Sen. Mike Johanns  
Co-Chair, Senate GA Caucus
Sen. Mark Pryor
Sen. Pat Roberts
Sen. Jon Tester
Sen. Tom Udall
Sen. Roger Wicker

Sen. James Risch
Sen. Olympia Snowe
Sen. John Thune
Sen. David Vitter
Sen. Ron Wyden

Cc: The Honorable Ray LaHood, Secretary, Department of Transportation
The Honorable Jeffrey Zients, Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable Michael Huerta, Acting Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration