



**AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

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February 27, 2015

The Honorable Dan Ruby  
Chairman, Transportation Committee  
North Dakota House of Representatives  
4620 46th Avenue NW  
Minot, ND 58703-8711

RE: Aircraft Registration Fee Modification Contained in Senate Bill 2109

Dear Chairman Ruby:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), a not-for-profit membership organization, is the world's largest aviation organization, representing the interests of general aviation aircraft owners and operators – including more than 2,500 in North Dakota. We write to express our concern over potential inequitable aircraft registration fee increases contained in Senate Bill 2109.

We appreciate and support the efforts of your Senate colleagues that previously amended Senate Bill 2109. However, our members remain concerned over the inequitable registration fee increases that remain in Senate Bill 2109. In some cases, large turbine powered aircraft will enjoy a reduced registration fee but small single-engine aircraft bear the burden of doubled registration fees over several years as a consequence of the existing fee depreciation schedule being eliminated. Since AOPA members in North Dakota primarily own and operate small single-engine aircraft that fall well below the 20,000 pound weight category in the bill, many of these North Dakota-based pilots view this legislation as levying an unfair fee increase on small piston-powered aircraft while providing a tax benefit to larger, turbine-powered aircraft.

**With the current increase in aviation activity in North Dakota and the resulting pressure on its airports, AOPA recognizes the Aeronautics Commission's need for additional staff to serve the needs of the aviation community and that additional revenues may be necessary to meet this need. However, AOPA urges the Legislature to further amend Senate Bill 2109 to ensure that small general aviation operators are not forced to absorb a tax increase viewed as unfair and beneficial only to large, turbine-powered aircraft.**

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. AOPA stands willing to discuss this issue and assist in crafting a suitable amendment to ensure North Dakota's general aviation industry continues to provide an annual economic impact exceeding \$1.5 billion annually at the State's 89 public use airports. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 301-695-2095 or at bryan.budds@aopa.org.

Very truly yours,

Bryan Budds  
Great Lakes Regional Manager