



## **Malibu-Mirage Owners & Pilots Association**

PO Box 1288, Green Valley, AZ 85622 • Phone: 520-399-1121 Fax: 866-292-7547 • russ46@cox.net

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The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

President Obama,

On behalf of the approximately 800 members of the MMOPA, I would like to express our collective concern over your proposal to add user fees for Air Traffic Control services to the taxes already paid on aviation fuel purchases. The issue of user fees has been examined countless times before, always with the same conclusion – taxes on fuel sales are the most fair and cost-efficient means of collecting revenue to offset the costs of aviation-related infrastructure and services. If the rate of fuel taxes is inadequate, then that is a separate issue that should be examined on its own merits, with the participation of the user community – aircraft owners and pilots.

Our members fly single-engine, 6-place aircraft in support of their businesses and professional practices. Personally, I am an electronics manufacturer in Lexington, KY with about 45 employees (55 before the recession). We use our aircraft to move our employees to job sites, meetings, tradeshow, customers and vendors all over the country. Operating our aircraft provides us a competitive advantage by saving time, flying directly into destinations that are better-served by thousands of smaller airports than the 24 regional commercial hubs. Also, when we need to take multiple people, our travel costs do not increase. It allows us to respond to customers almost instantly, usually out and back the same day, instead of multiple days, limited baggage, and overnight accommodations. The point is that General Aviation is an important alternative to increasingly difficult airline travel and is critical to American competitiveness and jobs. Its utility needs to be appreciated and supported, not politically mischaracterized as an extravagance.

User fees, and the additional bureaucracy required to administer them, are not the best solution. Frankly, in this poorly performing economy, many of us are struggling to keep our doors open and retain our employees here in the USA. What we need from the Federal government is to quit imposing new regulations that steal our time and resources from those activities that retain and produce jobs, and earn a reasonable profit for those willing to put capital at risk.

The General Aviation community will do its share and pay its way, but user fees that incentivize small aircraft operators to circumvent the Air Traffic Control system will compromise safety and grow our already bloated Federal payrolls. User fees are not the answer.

Please send your staff back to the drawing board and call on true experts, those who actually fly in the system, to offer ideas without unintended negative consequences. We cannot afford more mistakes.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Sisk, President  
Malibu Mirage Owners & Pilots Association (MMOPA)  
859-351-5429 [jsisk@mmopa.com](mailto:jsisk@mmopa.com)