

April 22, 2009

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500



Dear Mr. President,

The general aviation community, like all other industries in our country, has endured tough economic times. General aviation airport operators have seen a decrease in air traffic; communities and pilots have already had to curtail flights for business and for charity as they struggle to balance very tight budgets, and as you know well, many businesses that depend on these planes have had to resort to massive lay-offs just to keep their doors open.

Here in the "Air Capital of the World," we have been severely hit by this economic downturn, and I renew my earlier invitation for you to visit Wichita and see firsthand importance of this vital form of transportation and infrastructure, and the severe impact that towns and local economies around the country have seen in recent months.

Not only has general aviation manufacturing hit a new low in terms of sales, but since November, the Wichita-based manufacturer Cessna has been forced to layoff nearly 4,000 workers in Wichita alone. General aviation manufacturer Bombardier has cut 800 jobs in the Wichita area, and Wichita-based Hawker Beechcraft has announced 2,000 in total layoffs.

These lay-offs not only affect workers and their families, but the airports, industries, flight schools, mechanics and local economies in our state and around the country that depend on this crucial form of transportation. Within the context of discussion of the many other important segments of our economy that we must keep viable, one that has been less discussed is this crucial transportation infrastructure, which serves as a literal lifeline to well over 5000 communities across the country that do not have commercial air service.

In addition to these economic woes, recent negative press coverage of general aviation has exacerbated the struggle faced by those that use these planes. I know I speak for myself and mayors across the country when I say that we need to insist on corporate accountability when companies use taxpayer dollars. However, the press coverage of these incidents has unfortunately resulted in a harmful level of rhetoric about general aviation and has had a direct and detrimental result on this important industry. For this reason, I have joined with seventy mayors from across the country to urge you to speak out on behalf of this industry and the thousands of hard-working Americans whose livelihoods depend on it.

I look forward to working closely with you on this issue and assist with the challenges that lie ahead.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Brewer', enclosed within a thin, hand-drawn oval border.

Carl Brewer
Mayor

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