

EAA CHAPTER 80 News! NEBRASKA IOWA

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April 2007

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What is going on with the Government?

I want to start this editorial by saying that there are a lot of good people out there working for the government and a lot of governmental offices that help general aviation. I like those people and what they do. However, for all the agencies that are trying to hurt general aviation I say "What the Heck is going on?"

In case you haven't heard, Congress must take action by October 2007, as the existing authority to collect aviation taxes on fuel, passenger tickets, and air cargo waybills will expire. Therefore, the administration has made a proposal for the FAA budget that would:

- Raise general aviation gasoline taxes 367% from 19.1 to 70.1 cents per gallon (jet fuel 320% from 21.9 to 70.1 cents per gallon)
- Allow the FAA to impose user fee charges on GA aircraft flying in Class B airspace
- Allow the FAA to charge landing fees at some 215 airports
- Charge the airlines user fees, instead of taxes, and reduce the amount the airlines pay to the federal government
- Create an airline-dominated board to help set user fee rates and run the air traffic control system
- Allow the FAA to set fees and spending with no recourse to Congress or the courts.

The House Committee on Transportation has held hearings on this proposed budget. From these hearings we get an insight into the FAA managements view on this proposed funding change. FAA Administrator Marion Blakey stated that a change from a ticket and fuel tax backed Aviation Trust Fund (which has worked for 40 years) to a user fee structure is vital to unlocking the gridlock in the skies. "It's my firm belief that our status-quo financing structure cannot deliver the NextGen system we need, when and where we need it," she said. When asked if the proposal would hurt general aviation she replied, "General aviation would not be harmed.... All we're asking for is basic equity -- the airline passengers are overpaying for use of the airspace." Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.), the ranking member of the full committee and former chairman of the aviation subcommittee is siding with the administration. "I'd like to see the whole system paid for by the users, not by taxpayers who don't use the system". Luckily, he appears to be a lone voice in supporting the administration's plan. (From AOPA_epilot)

EAA's Case Against User Fees (From EAA)

EAA is continuing to work with other general aviation organizations to oppose the FAA's proposal for funding the nation's air traffic control system. The funding plan, which reflects the advocacy of the powerful big-airlines lobby, would implement user fees and sharply increase fuel taxes to replace the current, time-tested system of excise taxes on aviation fuel and airline passengers. EAA and the other general aviation groups view this as nothing but a ploy by the airlines to offload more of their costs onto general aviation while grabbing more control of the nation's airspace. Meanwhile, their proposals would require the establishment of a new and potentially costly bureaucracy.

In the past 10 years, the airline industry received a \$5 billion government bailout, a \$10 billion loan guarantee program, and a shift of some pension obligations to the U.S. taxpayer. Now, as many airlines are experiencing a recovery, they want to jettison even more costs by imposing user fees on general aviation.

The airlines, represented by the Air Transport Association (ATA), falsely claim they pay more than 90 percent of all aviation taxes but make up only two-thirds of the operational activity in the system. Yet in the 35 airline hubs that receive the vast majority of FAA funds and resources, general-aviation operations account for only 6% of the total. For example, when general aviation was prohibited from operating at Washington D.C.'s Reagan National Airport in the wake of 9/11, overall ATC costs there were not affected.

However, the cost of the user fee proposals to participants in general aviation, including the many EAA members who enjoy personal flight as a pastime, would be sizable. The FAA's proposal includes new fees to pay for the costs of numerous certification and registration activities, such as: registering an aircraft (\$130), replacing an aircraft registration (\$45), issuing an original dealer's aircraft certificate (\$130), issuing an additional aircraft certificate (\$105), issuing/renewing a special registration number (\$80/\$50), recording a security interest (\$130), recording a security interest in aircraft parts (\$130), issuing or replacing an airman certificate (\$50/\$25), issuing an airman medical certificate (\$42), and providing legal title opinions pertaining to aircraft transactions (\$100).

And, of course, there's the potentially devastating 3.5-fold fuel tax increase, from 19.4¢ to 70¢ per gallon, and a series of other user fees for access to the nation's busiest airports.

The FAA maintains that its plan is essential for funding the creation of the next generation air traffic control system. Adding insult to injury, the concepts and proposals for accomplishing this modernization entail greater restrictions and costs for general-aviation operations.

Meanwhile, projected revenue from a user fee system in 2008 would be approximately \$600 million less than the funds that would be raised by maintaining the current excise tax structure. The shortfall would persist, amounting to approximately \$900 million less funding from 2009 to 2012.

Another reason why general aviation opposes user fees can be found north of the border, in Canada: Ten years ago, when the ATC system was established as a government corporation (NavCanada), light general aviation was exempted from ATC and airport user fees. Now, despite an appeal to the Canadian Transportation Agency, general aviation light aircraft operators will pay charges for the use of seven important airports (including several reliever facilities) for the first time. According to the Canadian Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the airline community is viewing this as just the beginning of general aviation paying user fees in Canada.

Even more extreme examples of user fees harming or practically killing general aviation in numerous other countries add to the condemning evidence. Common sense indicates that any initial user fee scheme will eventually trickle down and be imposed on all flight-related operations.

The FAA's proposal would also transfer control of agency funding and oversight away from Congress and dramatically reduce public control of how the FAA exercises its discretionary spending.

"EAA remains categorically opposed to user fees," said Doug Macnair, EAA vice president of government relations. "Such a system will not enhance safety and it will not improve services. It will add barriers for thousands of recreational aviators while being a costly burden to the federal

government."

How, then, do the big airlines and the FAA attempt to justify such an imbalanced, unfair, and flawed proposal? Their rhetoric asserts that "fat cats" in private jets should pay more for using the nation's ATC and other services. But it conveniently overlooks the oppressive effects their proposals ultimately would have on average aviation enthusiasts like the members of a thousand EAA chapters across the nation. Those chapters are made up of people who already make sacrifices to afford their enjoyment of personal flight. They should not have to underwrite big businesses' use of, and attempts to commandeer, the nation's airspace.

I would like to ask the members of this EAA Chapter to take action. We need to let our elected officials understand how we feel about this issue. Everyone should go to the EAA website (eaa.org) and follow the links to an action-alert page (<http://eaa.org/govt/index.html>) where there is more information and instructions. In addition, if you are receiving this newsletter by email, I have attached two letters from EAA you can use to send to our Senators. See ya at the meeting, Will.

April Meeting Time & Location.

The Chapter 80 monthly meeting will be at 7:00PM on Monday, April 9th at the main hangar of Hangar One at Millard Airport, Omaha, NE. It is still located on South 132nd Street between Q and Harrison.

April Program.

Sorry to say, but I (Will Kroeger) will be the guest speaker at the meeting. I will be talking about radio communications. You are in luck though, I did attend the AOPA Safety Seminar, "Say it Right! Radio Comm in Today's Airspace" at Bellevue West High School on March 7th. Now, if I can only find my notes.... There will be a test!

EVENTS:	(B) - Breakfast / (L) - Lunch	
1st Sat	Chapter 1055 (B)	York, NE
3rd Sat	Chapter 569 (0730-1030)	Crete, NE
April 14	Fly-in, Turkey Mountain Airport	Shell Knob, MO
April 17-23	SUN'n FUN 2007	Lakeland FL
	www.sun-n-fun.org	
April 21	Wings of Remembrance	Newton, KS
	Spring Fly-In Pancake Breakfast	
May 5-6	Offutt AFB Airshow	Offutt AFB, NE
May 5	Fly-in (B)	Pella, IA
May 5	Fly-in (B)	Red Oak, IA
May 19	Fly-in	Point Lookout, MO
May 19	Fly-in (B) & Campout	Fulton, MO
May 20	Fly-in (B)	Cherokee, IA
May 26-27	Fly-in Salute to Veterans	Columbia, MO
May 27	Evelyn Sharpe Days	Ord, NE
June 22-24	RMRFI Fly-in	Denver, CO
July 23-29	AirVenture*	Oshkosh, WI

*You can now pre-order a printed copy of the 2007 AirVenture NOTAM by going to <http://www.airventure.org/2007/flying/index.html> and filling out the order form. Upon final NOTAM approval and publication by the FAA, expected in early May, those NOTAMs will be sent free of charge. Ask a member to get it for you if you do not have internet.

EAA Chapter 80
March 12, 2007
Official Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Scott Laughlin at 7:00 at Hanger One, MLE, Omaha, NE.

- A meal of fried chicken was available for \$5.00 and Scott indicated dinner will be available at all future meetings.
- The abbreviated business meeting was delayed so the movie "16R" could be viewed.
- At intermission a business meeting was held and Scott handed out Chapter Service Awards to the following individuals: Jim Ratte, Rob Hansen, Tom Wieduwilt aka TW, Bob Harvey, Leonard Lawton, Mike Howard, Bob Cartwright, Will Kroeger, Dale McClure, and Scott Laughlin.
- No raffle or old business.
- There were 3 visitors present.
- Scott announced that food will be available at all meetings

Treasurers Report:

- Treasurer Rob Hansen reported expenses of \$282.26, income of \$123.74 and a balance of \$2,987.03 in the checking account. Total cash assets were reported to be \$11,873.47. A motion was made and passed to accept the treasurer's report.

Meeting Minutes:

- A motion was made and passed to accept the previous month's minutes.

Young Eagles:

- Jim Ratte noted that the Young Eagle schedule was posted in the March Newsletter. He is waiting for the scholarship points for flights flown in 2006. It was recommended that the points be applied to a relative of a chapter member. Go to the chapter website for up-to-date Young eagle info.

Builder's Reports:

- Scott Laughlin is looking for a test pilot for his Zenith inaugural flight.
- Harlan Hain is seeking information on what is required backup instrumentation for a glass panel. His Epic will be equipped with a glass panel.

Tech Counselor / Flight Advisor:

- Magazines were available

Fly-out/Event Schedule:

- None Scheduled

Librarian Report:

- No report

Old Business:

- None discussed due to our program

New Business:

- Mike Howard suggested that the chapter have a flying event and he will plan and set a date.
- Council Bluffs received approval and will install an ILS in 2007.

Web Site:

- www.eaa80.org Ameet would like to visit with anyone who can provide history of chapter also please forward any items, articles or news to him so he can place on the web site.

Program:

- Movie 16R shown.

Meeting adjourned and movie continued.

Don Meyer

MORE INFO on YOUR GOVERNMENT AT WORK

Senate Bill Would Require TSA Plan For GA Security

The Senate last week passed a bill on aviation security that would require the Transportation Security Administration to develop a "standardized threat and vulnerability assessment program" for general aviation airports within one year. If the bill becomes law, the TSA would also be directed to consider providing grants to GA airports for security upgrades. The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) said it likes the idea of federal grants for security upgrades, but it worries that the TSA will impose new rules on GA airports without the funding to pay for them. Similar legislation was passed by the House earlier this year. The two versions now must be reconciled and then go to the White House. President Bush has threatened to veto the legislation if the final version allows TSA screeners to unionize, which the Senate bill does. NATA said if that happens, Congress is not likely to override the veto and the bill would die. (From AOPA_epilot)

Airline Style Regs for Small Repair Stations

The FAA is once again pushing a proposal that could put small repair stations out of business and increase maintenance costs for aircraft owners. The proposal would require all repair stations, regardless of size or complexity, to expand their current quality control systems to meet international standards. By the FAA's own estimate, the new quality control systems would burden about half of the small repair stations to the tune of \$34,500 each. "AOPA believes that many small shops will not be able to absorb the cost of complying with this mandate, particularly if they are a one or two person shop," (From AOPA Online)



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We now know why some members come to the meetings - food!



However, some do come to hear this guy speak. If you do not know who he is, maybe you need to start coming to the meetings.