

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 6, 2011

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Chairman  
Subcommittee of National Parks,  
Forests and Public Lands  
1017 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

We write to you regarding H.R. 1505, the *National Lands and Federal Security Protection Act*, which was marked up and reported from the Committee on Natural Resources on October 5, 2011. We appreciate your attention to this matter and consideration of our request.

As co-chairs of the House General Aviation Caucus, we have the opportunity to inform members and staff about the importance of general aviation to our economy and transportation system. We are glad that you are a member of the caucus.

Respectfully, we believe that H.R. 1505 might have unintended consequences; the closure of public-use recreational and backcountry airstrips. These airstrips attract thousands of recreational and hobby pilots every year and it is important they are protected for current and future generations to enjoy. They also have a positive economic impact on the surrounding communities, such as the sale of fuel, food, and lodging. The closing of any of these airstrips would be detrimental to many communities and ultimately our economic recovery. We are also concerned this legislation may impede the construction and development of new public-use airstrips on these lands.

Based on our reading of H.R. 1505, we believe it gives broad authority to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to access Federally-owned and managed land, specifically public-use recreational and backcountry airstrips, many of which are owned and managed by the Federal government. It is our understanding the intent of the bill is to improve border security by removing certain impediments DHS is struggling with and simply hope it is not at the expense of our nation's airstrips.

We ask that you consider including language in this legislation to clarify that DHS shall not have the authority to close or otherwise impede the use or construction of public-use recreational and backcountry airstrips. We stand ready to assist you in this process.

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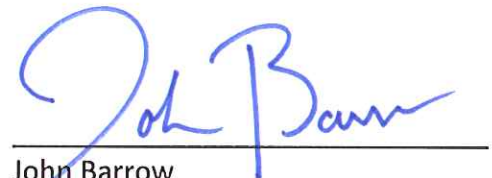
Again, thank you for your attention to this matter and consideration of our request. Please contact us directly or Mike Matousek (Rep. Sam Graves) or Brandon Webb (Rep. John Barrow) of our staff should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



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Sam Graves  
Member of Congress



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John Barrow  
Member of Congress

Cc: The Honorable Doc Hastings  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Ed Markey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources

The Honorable Peter King  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Bennie Thompson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Chairman  
Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Agriculture