



January 3, 2012 – On September 27, 2011, the General Aviation Airport Coalition initiated a letter-writing campaign to oppose user fees. This campaign generated 288 letters to Congress expressing general aviation airports' collective opposition to this new tax.

A copy of the letter is below:

Dear Senator/Congressman

President Obama's Deficit Reduction Plan includes a proposal to institute a \$100 per flight fee on aircraft that use controlled airspace. I understand the need to find new ways to enhance Federal revenue collections and stimulate our economy; however, this tax is certain to financially decimate the aviation industry. I am not suggesting that general aviation avoid paying its fair share; however, as a member of the General Aviation Airport Coalition (GAAC) I am concerned that, if imposed, the affects will cost this industry more in jobs than the benefit of the revenue gained.

This plan will affect the entire aviation industry, which includes general and commercial aviation. General aviation alone has an annual economic impact of \$150 billion and is responsible for some 1.2 million jobs. General/business aviation represents an arm that keeps more than 5,500 public use airports in the nation alive.

Page 23 of the President's Deficit Reduction Plan includes the following: *"To reduce the deficit and more equitably share the cost of air traffic services across the aviation user community, the Administration proposes to establish a new mandatory surcharge for air traffic services. This proposal would create a \$100 per flight fee, payable to the FAA, by aviation operators who fly in controlled airspace."*

Commercial airlines are as much against this tax as are general aviation airports. However, those companies have the option to pass the additional cost on to their customers. General aviation has no such option. We must simply absorb the cost as one more part of running an efficient transportation network.

A second issue that must be considered with this new proposal is the administrative function of collecting the tax. The cost to collect fees has not been addressed, but will certainly reduce the projected revenue from the user fee; not to mention the considerable time it will take to become operational.

The aviation industry is not a special group that should be absolved of the responsibility to help fund the system. We are willing to pay our fair share of the costs. The system of collecting fuel tax has been in place and worked well for decades. The people who fly the most, pay the most, period. It's easy and efficient.

Congressmen Sam Graves, John Barrow, Tom Petri, and Jerry Costello, leaders of the General Aviation Congressional Caucus, are sending a letter to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, asking the Committee to table any consideration of aviation user fees. In addition to supporting GAAC's position on user fees, please contact one of these offices and sign the letter. Bottom line: the current system of aviation fuel taxes is a stable, efficient, and equitable source of funding. Imposing a user fee tax is a bad idea.

Sincerely,