

## BACKCOUNTRY LANDING STRIP ACCESS ACT

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SEPTEMBER 12, 2000.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, from the Committee on Resources,  
submitted the following

### R E P O R T

together with

### DISSENTING VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 3661]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3661) to help ensure general aviation aircraft access to Federal land and to the airspace over that land, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act”.

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture should adopt a nationwide policy for governing backcountry aviation issues related to the management of Federal land under the jurisdiction of those Secretaries and should require regional managers to adhere to that policy.

(2) Aircraft landing strips serve an essential safety role as emergency landing areas.

(3) Aircraft landing strips provide access to people who would otherwise be physically unable to enjoy national parks, national forests, and other Federal lands and serve an essential purpose in search and rescue, firefighting, forest, and ecological management, research, and aerial mapping.

#### SEC. 3. PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERATION OF ACTIONS AFFECTING AIRCRAFT LANDING STRIPS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Neither the Secretary of the Interior nor the Secretary of Agriculture shall take any action which would permanently close or render or declare

as unserviceable any aircraft landing strip located on Federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of either Secretary unless—

- (1) the head of the aviation department of each State in which the aircraft landing strip is located has approved the action;
  - (2) notice of the proposed action and the fact that the action would permanently close or render or declare as unserviceable the aircraft landing strip has been published in the Federal Register;
  - (3) a 90-day public comment period on the action has been provided after the publication under paragraph (2); and
  - (4) any comments received during the comment period provided under paragraph (3) have been taken into consideration by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as the case may be, and the head of the aviation department of each State in which the affected aircraft landing strip is located.
- (b) NATIONAL POLICY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall—
- (1) adopt a nationwide policy that is in accordance with this Act for governing backcountry aviation issues related to the management of Federal land under the jurisdiction of those Secretaries; and
  - (2) require regional managers to adhere to that policy.
- (c) REQUIREMENTS FOR POLICIES.—A policy affecting air access to an aircraft landing strip located on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture, including the policy required by subsection (b), shall not take effect unless the policy—
- (1) states that the Federal Aviation Administration has the sole authority to control aviation and airspace over the United States; and
  - (2) seeks and considers comments from State governments and the public.
- (d) MAINTENANCE OF AIRSTRIPS.—
- (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall consult with—
    - (A) the head of the aviation department of each State in which an aircraft landing strip on Federal land under the jurisdiction of that Secretary is located; and
    - (B) other interested parties,
 to ensure that such aircraft landing strips are maintained in a manner that is consistent with the resource values of the adjacent area.
  - (2) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture may enter into cooperative agreements with interested parties for the maintenance of aircraft landing strips located on Federal land.
- (e) EXCHANGES OR ACQUISITIONS.—Closure or purposeful neglect of any aircraft landing strip, or any other action which would render any aircraft landing strip unserviceable, shall not be a condition of any Federal acquisition of or exchange involving private property upon which the aircraft landing strip is located.
- (f) NEW AIRCRAFT LANDING STRIPS NOT CREATED.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to create or authorize additional aircraft landing strips.
- (g) PERMANENTLY CLOSE.—For the purposes of this Act, the term “permanently close” means any closure the duration of which is more than 180 days in any calendar year.
- (h) APPLICABILITY.—
- (1) AIRCRAFT LANDING STRIPS.—This Act shall apply only to established aircraft landing strips on Federal lands administered by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture that are commonly known and have been or are consistently used for aircraft landing and departure activities.
  - (2) ACTIONS, POLICIES, EXCHANGES, AND ACQUISITIONS.—Subsections (a), (c), and (e) shall apply to any action, policy, exchange, or acquisition, respectively, that is not final on the date of the enactment of this Act.
- (i) FAA AUTHORITY NOT AFFECTED.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the authority of the Federal Aviation Administration over aviation or airspace.

#### PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 3661 is to help ensure general aviation aircraft access to federal land and to the airspace over that land.

#### BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

Backcountry aircraft landing strips serve the public in a variety of ways. Most important is the role they play in public safety. Backcountry airstrips are utilized in search and rescue activities

and firefighting efforts, as well as provide areas for disabled aircraft to make emergency landings. These airstrips also serve general aviation purposes, providing access to those who would otherwise be physically unable to recreate on and enjoy public lands. Moreover, backcountry airstrips are often used in ecological management, research, and aerial mapping.

Many backcountry airstrips have been closed or rendered unserviceable by federal agencies responsible for land management. The closures are frequently done without the benefit of public comment. This has led to several complaints by many private pilots who have used these airstrips for a number of years and desire to see them remain open unless there is sufficient and valid justification for their closure.

H.R. 3661 addresses this situation by preventing the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture from permanently closing or rendering unserviceable backcountry airstrips without first consulting with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the State aviation department where the landing strip is located. The proposed closure would also need to be published in the Federal Register with a 90-day public comment period. H.R. 3661 also directs the Secretaries to adopt a nationwide policy in accordance with the bill governing general aviation on federal lands. H.R. 3661 also directs the Secretaries to consult with State aviation departments to ensure the airstrips are maintained in a manner that is consistent with the resource values of the adjacent area.

During Subcommittee consideration of H.R. 3661, Congressman James V. Hansen offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute which was adopted and significantly changed the bill. The amendment removed the requirements for the Interior and Agricultural Departments to consult with the FAA, authorized the Secretaries to enter into cooperative agreements with interested parties for the maintenance of the airstrips, and assured that the bill did not authorize the creation of any additional landing strips.

The amendment also defined airstrips as those identified on State or FAA aeronautical charts. It became clear, however, that this definition was inadequate because State and FAA aeronautical charts did not include many of the backcountry airstrips that were at issue. Because of this, the Full Resource Committee adopted an en bloc amendment which, in part, defined landing strips as those that are commonly known and consistently used. The Committee wants to make it clear that this definition is meant to be interpreted as inclusive rather than exclusive. Many backcountry landing strips covered by this bill are indicated on either State or FAA aeronautical charts, but not all of them. Backcountry landing strips not found on these charts are frequently indicated on other legitimate maps, for example, on United States Geological Survey Series maps, United States Forest Service maps, and Bureau of Land Management maps. Furthermore, backcountry and general aviation pilots, along with personnel from the federal agencies, are keenly aware of where landing strips are located and in what condition they are in. Both the pilots and federal personnel also are generally aware of how often the landing strips have been or are used for aircraft landing and departures. Combining the legitimate maps with the general knowledge of where landing strips are located, the fed-

eral agencies, State aeronautics boards, and pilots have a clear idea what landing strips are commonly known and consistently used. The Committee expects that personnel with the federal government, the State aeronautics boards, and the pilots complete an inventory in each State of the relevant landing strips and agree on what strips this bill will affect.

The Committee makes one other note. The term “established” as used in Section 3(h)(1) does not have the meaning of established by law or regulation. Rather, the term means that the landing strips are in existence, can be located, and have been or are being used for aircraft departures and landings.

#### COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 3661 was introduced on February 15, 2000, by Congressman James V. Hansen (R-UT). The bill was referred to the Committee on Resources, and additionally to the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Within the Resources Committee, the bill was referred to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands and the Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health. On April 6, 2000, the Subcommittee held a hearing on the bill. On May 18, 2000, the Subcommittee met to consider the bill. An amendment in the nature of substitute was offered by Congressman Hansen, as described above. Congressman Carlos Romero-Barcelo offered a substitute amendment to the Hansen amendment in the nature of a substitute. The Romero-Barcelo amendment failed by voice vote. The Hansen amendment was then adopted by voice vote. The bill, as amended, was then ordered favorably reported to the Full Committee by a roll call vote of 6–5, as follows:

106th Congress  
Subcommittee on National Parks & Public Lands

**RECORDED VOTES**

Date: May 18, 2000

Bill Number/Subject Matter: H.R. 3661, to help ensure general aviation aircraft access to Federal land and to the airspace over that land.

Amendment Number \_\_\_\_\_ Offered By: \_\_\_\_\_

Roll Call: Passed: 6/5 Defeated: \_\_\_\_\_ (On Final Passage)

Voice Vote: Passed: \_\_\_\_\_ Defeated: \_\_\_\_\_

Republicans	Yea	Nea	Present	Democrats	Yea	Nea	Present
Hansen	X			<i>Romero-Barceló</i>		X	
Gallegly				<i>Rahall</i>			
Duncan	X			<i>Vento</i>			
Hefley				<i>Kildee</i>		X	
Pombo				<i>Christian-Christiansen</i>			
Cubin				<i>Kind</i>			
Radanovich				<i>Inslee</i>		X	
Jones	X			<i>Tom Udall</i>			
Cannon	X			<i>Mark Udall</i>		X	
Hill	X			<i>Crowley</i>		X	
Gibbons	X			<i>Holt</i>			
Souder							
Sherwood							
Total Republicans	6			Total Democrats		5	

On June 20, 2000, the Resources Committee met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health was discharged from further consideration of the bill by unanimous consent. Congressman Hansen offered an en bloc amendment which made technical changes, re-titled the bill, and clarified which landing strips are covered under the bill. The amendment was adopted by voice vote. Congressman Mark Udall (D-CO) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute which required a study of the issue. The amendment failed on a voice vote. No further amendments were offered and the bill, as amended, was then ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by voice vote.

#### COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Resources' oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Article I, section 8 of the Constitution of the United States grants Congress the authority to enact this bill.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII

1. *Cost of Legislation.* Clause 3(d)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison by the Committee of the costs which would be incurred in carrying out this bill. However, clause 3(d)(3)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the Committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974.

2. *Congressional Budget Act.* As required by clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, this bill does not contain any new budget authority, spending authority, credit authority, or an increase or decrease in revenues or tax expenditures.

3. *Government Reform Oversight Findings.* Under clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has received no report of oversight findings and recommendations from the Committee on Government Reform on this bill.

4. *Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate.* Under clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has received the following cost estimate for this bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, July 24, 2000.*

Hon. DON YOUNG,  
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 3661, the Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Megan Carroll.

Sincerely,

STEVEN LIEBERMAN  
(For Dan L. Crippen, Director).

Enclosure.

*H.R. 3661—Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act*

Summary: H.R. 3661 would establish new requirements related to aircraft landing strips on federal lands managed by the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior. It would prohibit the secretaries from closing certain aircraft landing strips for more than 180 days a year without the approval of the head of the aviation department of the state in which the landing strip is located. The bill also would require the secretaries to maintain those landing strips in consultation with state aviation departments and other interested parties and would authorize them to enter into cooperative agreements for that purpose. Finally, the bill would direct the secretaries to develop a national policy for managing certain landing strips under their jurisdiction.

Based on information from the Department of the Interior (DOI) and the Forest Service, CBO estimates that implementing this legislation would cost about \$59 million over the 2001–2005 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. H.R. 3661 would not affect direct spending or receipts; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply.

H.R. 3661 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (UMRA) and would benefit state and local governments by ensuring that they are consulted about the maintenance and potential closure of federally owned landing strips. Any costs that such governments would incur to consult with federal agencies or to approve the closing of a landing strip would not be significant.

Estimated cost to the Federal Government: The estimated budgetary impact of H.R. 3661 is shown in the following table. The costs of this legislation fall within budget function 300 (natural resources and environment).

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
CHANGES IN SPENDING SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATION						
Estimated authorization level .....	0	6	10	14	15	15
Estimated outlays .....	0	5	10	14	15	15

Basis of estimate: For the purposes of this estimate, CBO assumes that H.R. 3661 will be enacted by the end of fiscal year 2000 and that the amounts estimated to be necessary will be provided at the start of each fiscal year. Estimates of outlays are based on historical spending patterns for similar activities.

According to the DOI and the Forest Service, thousands of aircraft landing strips exist or have existed on federal lands, and only a portion of them have been identified. Under current law, only a fraction of those landing strips are maintained routinely, resulting in a significant backlog of maintenance projects. Based on information from DOI and the Forest Service, CBO estimates that the land management agencies currently spend about \$2 million annually to perform some maintenance on roughly 400 landing strips on federal land.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3661 would increase federal costs for two reasons. First, we expect that states and interested parties would ask federal agencies to maintain hundreds of landing strips that receive little, if any, maintenance under current law. Second, we expect that states would require the agencies to keep some airstrips open for longer periods of time, which would increase the costs of maintaining the affected sites.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the consultation and planning process outlined in the bill would take about two years. Thus, the estimated cost in the initial years primarily reflects added administrative expenses and increased spending for readily identifiable projects. Once the consultation process is completed, we estimate that additional maintenance costs would be \$14 million in 2003, and would grow in subsequent years with inflation. We assume that, under H.R. 3661, the agencies would maintain a total of about 1,400 high-priority airstrips and that the average annual cost to meet the new standards would range between \$1,000 and \$35,000 per airstrip, averaging about \$12,000. We also assume that the agencies would not spend significant amounts on other, lower-priority airstrips on federal lands.

Pay-as-you-go considerations: None.

Intergovernmental and private-sector impact: H.R. 3661 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in UMRA, and would benefit state and local governments by ensuring that they are consulted about the maintenance and potential closure of federally owned landing strips. Any costs incurred to consult with federal agencies or to approve the closing of a landing strip would not be significant.

Estimate prepared by: Federal costs: Megan Carroll; impact on State, local, and tribal governments: Victoria Heid Hall; impact on the private sector; Sarah Sitarek.

Estimate approved by: Robert A. Sunshine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC LAW 104-4

This bill contains no unfunded mandates.

#### PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

This bill is not intended to preempt any State, local or tribal law.



## CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

If enacted, this bill makes no changes to existing law.

## COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,  
*Washington, DC, August 16, 2000.*

Hon. LARRY COMBEST,  
*Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,  
Longworth HOB, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On June 20, 2000, the Committee on Resources ordered favorably reported with amendments H.R. 3661, the Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Agriculture because it affects the management of small airstrips in national forests by the Secretary of Agriculture. I have forwarded a copy of the draft bill report for your review.

The author of the bill, Congressman Hansen, would like to see it considered on the Floor before we adjourn the 106th Congress. Knowing that we have only a few weeks at most left, I ask that you allow the Committee on Agriculture to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled under suspension of the rules as soon as possible. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and I look forward to bringing H.R. 3661 to the Floor soon.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG, *Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,  
*Washington, DC, August 18, 2000.*

Hon. DON YOUNG,  
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,  
Longworth HOB, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On June 20, 2000, the Committee on Resources ordered to be reported H.R. 3661, the Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act. As you are aware, the Committee on Agriculture was granted an additional referral of this legislation because it affects the management of small airstrips in national forests by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Knowing of your interest in expediting this legislation and in maintaining the continued consultation between our Committee on these matters, I agree to discharge H.R. 3661 from consideration by the Committee on Agriculture. I do so with the understanding that by discharging the bill the Committee on Agriculture does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over this or similar measures. In addition, in the event a conference with the Senate is requested on this matter, the Committee on Agriculture reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees from this Committee, if one should become necessary.

Thank you very much for your courtesy in this matter and I look forward to continued cooperation between our Committees as we deal with these issues in the future.

Sincerely,

LARRY COMBEST, *Chairman.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,  
*Washington, DC, August 16, 2000.*

Hon. BUD SHUSTER,  
*Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure,  
Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: On June 20, 2000, the Committee on Resources ordered favorably reported with amendments H.R. 3661, the Backcountry Landing Strip Access Act. The bill was referred primarily to the Committee on Resources, with an additional referral to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I have forwarded a copy of the draft bill report for your review.

The author of the bill, Congressman Hansen, would like to see it considered on the Floor before we adjourn the 106th Congress. Knowing that we have only a few weeks at most left, I ask that you allow the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be discharged from further consideration of the bill so that it may be scheduled as soon as possible. This discharge in no way affects your jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill and it will not serve as precedent for future referrals. If a conference on the measure is convened, I would support your request to have the Committee on Transportation represented on that conference. Finally, you should know that Subcommittee on Aviation Chairman Congressman Duncan supported the bill during its consideration in the Resources Committee.

Thank you for your consideration of my request and I look forward to bringing H.R. 3661 to the Floor soon.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG, *Chairman.*

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
*Washington, DC, September 8, 2000.*

Hon. DON YOUNG,  
*Chairman, Committee on Resources,  
Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 3881, the Backcountry Land Strip Access Act.

I appreciate your strong interests and those of the bill's sponsor, Congressman Hansen, in moving this important legislation to the House Floor as soon as possible. Accordingly, I will support discharging the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure from further consideration of the bill.

As you know, our Committee has jurisdiction over H.R. 3661's subject matter involving civil aviation. Our Aviation Subcommittee chaired by Congressman Duncan and your National Parks Subcommittee chaired by Congressman Hansen held a joint hearing on

this bill in April. As a result of that hearing and the cooperative efforts of our two staffs, several changes to the introduced bill have been made that are incorporated in the version approved by your Committee. As a result, I see no need for a separate review by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

I appreciate your assurances that a decision to be discharged from further consideration of the bill should not be considered as precedent for future referrals of similar measures or as affecting the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's subject matter jurisdiction and that you would support the appointment of conferees from the Committee should a conference with the Senate become necessary. In addition, I would appreciate your support for any further clarifications or revisions that our staff agree might be helpful or necessary and would appreciate your inclusion of this letter in any Floor debate accompanying House consideration of H.R. 3661.

I congratulate you for your leadership on H.R. 3661 and look forward to working with you and your colleagues as the legislation advances.

Sincerely,

BUD SHUSTER, *Chairman.*

## DISSENTING VIEWS

We oppose H.R. 3661 because it represents unwise federal land management policy. According to the Majority, this legislation is necessary because the National Park Service (NPS), Forest Service (FS), Fish and Wildlife Service (F&W) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) frequently close landing strips located on federally owned land without public notice. Bill proponents argue that, because such actions endanger pilot safety and hamper search and rescue operations, requiring federal land managers to obtain permission from state aviation officials before closing a strip is justified.

However, none of the witnesses testifying in support of this legislation before the National Parks and Public Lands Subcommittee in April<sup>1</sup> provided any evidence that such arbitrary strip closings actually take place. To the contrary, agency witnesses made clear that established strips can only be closed after completion of the public process mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). The few strip-closure anecdotes offered during the hearing were completely refuted by agency witness and in most cases turned out to have taken place on private, not public, land.

The real purpose of H.R. 3661 is not to prevent federal land managers from closing landing strips without notice but to prevent them from closing landing strips at all. If enacted, this legislation would provide state aviation officials with a veto over decisions made by federal land managers regarding public lands. Even if an agency has completed the public NEPA process and determined that continued aircraft usage poses a threat to resource values on federal land, a strip could not be closed without state permission. These public lands belong to all of the American people, but H.R. 3661 would allow state officials to dictate to the federal government when, where and how private pilots should have access to those lands.

H.R. 3661 also places new and unreasonable requirements on federal land managers. Not only can NPS, FS, F&W and BLM not close a strip without state permission, they are also prohibited from taking any action which would render a strip "unserviceable." While the bill fails to define this term, one reading of this provision is that federal land managers must begin performing maintenance on these strips. Of course, the bill provides no definitions, standards or enforcement provisions to guide the agencies in this new role. No inventory of existing strips has ever been created and the agencies are not assured of any additional funding for this new

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Robert Barrett, Director, Utah Department of Transportation Aeronautical Operations; Mr. Barton Welsh, Aeronautics Administrator, Division of Aeronautics, Idaho Transportation Department; Mr. Phil Boyer, President, Aircraft Owners and Pilots' Association; Mr. Steve Durtchi, President, Utah Backcountry Pilots' Association.

task. Given this lack of critical information and resources, the fiscal and management burdens created by H.R. 3661 will be substantial.

In summary, H.R. 3661 will cede management of federal lands to state aviation officials while also saddling federal land managers with undefined and potentially expensive new responsibilities. Such a step would be a disservice to the taxpayers to whom these lands and their resources belong. We join with the Administration and others in opposing this misguided legislation and urge our colleagues to do likewise.

GEORGE MILLER.  
NEIL ABERCROMBIE.  
FRANK PALLONE, Jr.  
ENI FALEOMAVAEGA.

