



NEWS

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NASAO Responds to *USA Today* Attack on General Aviation

Washington, DC, September 17, 2009 – The National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO) joined others in the aviation community today to denounce *USA Today's* September 17, 2009 front page story "Little-used Airports Cost Taxpayers Big Money".

In a letter to *USA Today*, NASAO President and CEO Henry M. Ogradzinski said, "I am appalled by the misleading and blatantly biased hit-job *USA Today* conducted on general aviation airports."

Ogradzinski personally called reporter Thomas Frank two months ago to offer facts and figures on general aviation airports and to offer knowledgeable and credible spokespersons at all levels of government. He wanted Mr. Frank to know that general aviation employs 1.2 million Americans and contributes \$150 billion to the national economy annually, and that general aviation airports are critically important lifelines to rural communities and economic engines that have a very positive influence on local economies. These airports are an appropriate and significant part of our integrated national system of airports – thus important to the entire transportation network and the safety and security of all Americans.

In closing remarks Ogradzinski said, "Instead of talking to the state government professionals who *serve the public interest in aviation* all across the nation, who would have discredited his predetermined thesis, Mr. Frank chose to rely primarily upon those who agreed with his views including an airline lobbyist, an anti-tax, anti-aviation fringe group, one misguided mayor (among the thousands who fully support their local airports) and several consultants with their own axes to grind."

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NASAO represents state government aviation agencies which serve the public interest in the states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Please visit our website at <http://www.nasao.org>.