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May 8th, 2024

Senate Transportation Committee
Stephanie Kunze, Chair

AOPA Testimony in Support of S.B. 206 / Derelict Aircraft

Chair Kunze, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for bringing this bill to the committee for a hearing. I am Kyle Lewis, Great Lakes Regional Manager of Government Affairs for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the world's largest aviation organization, representing pilots, aircraft owners, and aviation enthusiasts, of which over 9,500 of our members reside in the State of Ohio. **I write on behalf of our members to support the passage of Senate Bill 206 relating to the disposal of derelict and abandoned aircraft.**

A top issue of our membership is the availability of adequate indoor hangar and tie-down space (outside aircraft storage) on general aviation (GA) public-use airports. Airports across the country are faced with budgetary constraints for construction of new ramp space and hangar facilities to house aircraft. GA airports are reliant on limited revenue streams to make the airport as self-sustaining as possible. Some of these limited revenue streams are fuel sales, land leases for aeronautical purposes, hangar rentals, and in some cases, land available for lease to non-aeronautical uses like industrial or business parks. Hangar space is at a premium right now, and demand is driving up prices. The lack of a specific legal method to dispose of derelict aircraft is not helping this issue as unairworthy, unpaid rent, or outright abandoned aircraft are taking up precious hangar spaces.

Airport management at GA airports struggle to dispose of aircraft that have become derelict or abandoned for situational reasons outside of the owners' or airport control. These aircraft become not only an eyesore on airport property, but cost the airport revenue as they take up profitable and revenue-generating space in a hangar or on the ramp. Unlike road vehicles, aircraft cannot be easily towed to an impound lot, so they remain where parked on our airports. There is



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no clear path for an airport to legally dispose of these aircraft in Ohio. Senate Bill 206 will provide that path for resolution to these issues.

These aircraft can also become safety concerns, creating a hazard to airport operations by attracting nesting wildlife habitats. These aircraft may go unmaintained and begin to leak fluids or in extreme cases, corrode and become unstable and hazardous to users of the airport.

The bill calls for clear timelines, communication methods, and reasonable actions to be taken by airport management to contact the registered owner of an aircraft before taking action to remove, salvage, or transfer ownership of the aircraft. Recently, Indiana enacted a similar piece of legislation to curtail this problem at airports – the bill easily passed the Indiana legislature with support from AOPA, and the airport management association, Aviation Indiana.

Again, AOPA is asking the committee to support and pass S.B. 206 to ensure ample time for further action on the bill before Summer Recess.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at kyle.lewis@aopa.org or 301-695-2229.

Thank you for your time,

Kyle Lewis
Great Lakes Regional Manager, AOPA