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From: SWECKER Mitch T * ODA
Sent: Friday, February 04, 2011 4:25 PM
To: Mark Gardiner
Subject:

Press Releases

Press Release of Senator Wyden

Wyden, Merkley Amendment Will Protect Residential Through the Fence Agreements

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

Washington, D.C. – Fighting back against an FAA regulation that seriously devalues homes that have agreements allowing secure, private access to some rural airports, U.S. Senators Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), as well as Senator Jim Inhofe (R- Okla.) have introduced an amendment to the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill to overturn the regulation banning Through the Fence agreements. The bipartisan Through the Fence amendment will make it possible for home owners to maintain their TTF agreements indefinitely and allow airports to enter into new agreements.

“Through the Fence agreements have been working at airports like Independence for decades,” Wyden said. **“They are central not just to the value of these homes but to the flow of goods and services at these regional hubs. Some regulations like this latest FAA rule have unintended consequences and it is up to us to fix them.”**

“For many rural communities in Oregon the local airport provides both a transportation link for residents and economic development opportunities for the community,” said Merkley. **“The FAA should not change the rules and put small airports and the jobs they support at risk. Continuing to allow our rural airports to partner with local communities with “through the fence” agreements helps keep Oregonians on the job.”**

Residential Through the Fence (TTF) agreements allow residents with homes adjacent to some rural airports to have secured access to runways. Many are amateur pilots who store their planes on their properties and purchased these houses specifically to have access to the runways. In 2009, the FAA issued a regulation effectively banning new TTFs and limiting existing ones to a 20 year lifespan. The inability to renew TTFs would cause the home values of the houses built alongside airports to drop as a major selling point to the property is lost.

The amendment to the FAA reauthorization bill introduced today will allow TTF agreements to continue in the same safe, secure way they always had. It protects homeowners and the jobs that are created by businesses that operate under the assistance of TTF agreements and it protects local jurisdictions that rely on the property taxes that come from residents with TTFs. In addition to Independence, airports in Scappoose, Aurora and Creswell, Oregon may be affected.