

Every part of American society has been forced to adjust in the wake of the terrorist attacks of last September 11. But representatives of America's General Aviation community are concerned that this crucial part of the national transportation system is being singled out for controls that are neither necessary nor fair. The blanket grounding of the GA fleet and closure of many airports in the immediate aftermath of the attacks may have been understandable at the time. But as the months go on, the continuation of highly restrictive regulations, and the suggestion that controls might actually be increased, is harder to justify. The general aviation fleet played no part in the terrible destruction of September 11, and its potential to wreak future damage is less than that of other transportation systems. We ask therefore that restrictions on General Aviation be considered with the same balance between security and efficiency now being applied in every other part of our society.

For the moment, General Aviation has not been judged by the same standard as other industries. Instead, it has, without good reason, been treated like a unique "threat." No other means of transportation has been subjected to the same open-ended prohibitions and shutdowns. There is no other industry whose customers, employees, and owners have been simply forbidden to do business, as was the case on a large scale for many weeks and remains so for certain airports even now. Flight instructors can no longer take their students to Potomac, Hyde, or College Park airports for valuable learning experiences. Local aircraft owners can no longer take their airplanes to those airports for maintenance or repair work - and the mechanics based there have severe reductions in their potential business. College Park Airport's tenancy has dropped from 90 prior to 9/11 to only 35 today. Cancellation of four fly-in conventions will adversely impact the airport and local economy. These restrictions remain in place despite the absence of any plausible evidence that General Aviation is a security threat.

In the spirit of fairness, and consistent with the goal of returning to as normal and productive a level of American life as possible, we ask you to rescind the TFRs and return our airports to the public uses for which they were intended.