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March 12, 2013

The Honorable Michael P. Huerta  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

RE: FAA CONTRACT TOWER CLOSURE – OGDEN HINCKLEY AIRPORT

Dear Administrator Huerta:

I am writing to express urgent and serious objections regarding the potential closure of tower operations at the Ogden Hinckley Airport in Ogden, Utah, which apparently has been proposed by you as a response to the President's sequestration order.

The proposed closure of the tower at the Ogden Airport (OGD) will negatively impact the National Airspace System. The runways at Hill Air Force Base, home of the 388<sup>th</sup> and 419<sup>th</sup> F-16 Fighter Wings and the Ogden Air Logistics Center, are located less than four miles from those at OGD. In fact, the final approach to Hill AFB Runway 14 goes directly over the Ogden Airport.

It is disturbing to me that the FAA would be proposing this action without having entered into direct and substantive consultations with the United States Air Force, or the 388<sup>th</sup> and 419<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wings, regarding the negative impacts to national defense. Far from saving taxpayer funds, the FAA's action of closing OGD tower would simply shift the financial and operational burdens of doing what is the FAA's responsibility in this part of the national airspace to the Department of Defense.

Many other logistical arguments are involved with regard to the proximity of military and civilian air traffic. It is my understanding that the Ogden Airport Manager will be addressing these points to you in a more detailed manner under separate cover.

However, I believe it vital for you to consider that OGD has been used for emergency landings – including F-16 fighters - when Hill Air Force Base suddenly becomes

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unavailable, potentially sparing the very lives of pilots as well as multi-million dollar military aircraft.

Within the next three years, Hill AFB will be home to the first active duty F-35 squadrons. Hill will also be receiving its first F-35s this summer for maintenance and depot modifications. The traffic flow and landing patterns for these valuable aircraft, as well as the many other platforms (including F-22, F-16, B-1, B-2, C-17, C-130, A-10, and KC-135 aircraft) which utilize the Utah Test and Training Range, would be severely hampered if OGD tower is not operational, thus also increasing avoidable hazards to pilots and the general public.

In sum, uncontrolled airspace so close to Hill AFB airspace would provide greater risk to the National Airspace System with negligible cost savings. In light of these compelling facts, I respectfully request that you reconsider the OGD tower closure and remove it from the list of those slated to be closed.

I look forward to your prompt written reply.

Sincerely,



Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress