



WINNIPEG
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

November 12, 2014

The Honourable Lisa Raitt, P.C., M.P.,
Department of Transport
330 Sparks Street,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5

Re: Proposed Amendment to the Aeronautics Act, Bill C-43

Dear Minister:

The Winnipeg Airports Authority (WAA) would like to express our concern regarding proposed amendments to the Aeronautics Act currently contained in Sections 143 and 144 of Bill C-43.

We had been made aware of the Government's apprehension over the types of operations being considered by certain small aerodromes. Our understanding of the intent of any proposed amendment was to provide the Minister of Transport with additional powers, perceived as required in order to address those specific concerns. With those explanations provided through committees of our Airport Association we had no particular issue with the intent. The expanded powers being considered in Bill C-43 however also captures virtually all of our airport development and activity. While there may have been informal discussions between Transport Canada and certain airports on issues related to new private aerodromes, there was no direct consultation with the WAA or with industry on the broader language currently incorporated in C-43.

There is great concern that the revised wording will subject our airport to direct appeals to the Minister on the basis of unknown measure referred to as the "public interest" and to thereby create a new and incredibly politicized environment which will undo the unquestionable success of the airport devolution model in Canada. In considering these amendments and the potentially unintended consequences of the current wording, one must also raise the specter of the impact these amendments will have on our bond ratings or the shifting of airports, through these actions, to potentially now be considered agents of the Crown. These considerations should not be minimized.

We contend that this legislation should have been subjected to the processes that normally would be undertaken by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Transport on aviation-related legislation so that the implications of it could be properly considered and the language amended, as needed, to better match the stated objectives. If the language cannot be effectively amended we suggest that this part of Bill C-43 be removed until such time as this matter can be given proper consideration through consultation with the aviation industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BR', with a long, sweeping tail that extends downwards and to the right.

Barry W. Rempel
President & CEO

cc: The Honourable Joe Oliver
Christine Lafrance – Finance Committee Clerk
Philippe Grenier-Michaud – Transport, Infrastructure and Communities
Committee Clerk
The Honourable Shelly Glover
The Honourable Steven Fletcher
Mr. Garth Smorang, Chair of the Board, Winnipeg Airports Authority
Mr. John Gibson, Chair of the Canadian Airports Council