

United States Senate

January 26, 2017

Michael P. Huerta, Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Huerta:

Thank you for your work to fulfill the third class medical reform required by section 2307 of the *FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016* (P.L. 114-190) and implementing regulatory relief now known as BasicMed. I write today to request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) continue to accept Montana and other states' driver's licenses that are not compliant with REAL ID law when applying BasicMed.

BasicMed, effective May 1, 2017, will allow general aviation pilots under certain limited circumstances to fly without holding an FAA medical certificate, so long as they meet certain medical and motor vehicle driving requirements, such as possessing a valid state issued driver's license and consent to a National Driver Registry check. In addition to reducing the regulatory burden on the current general aviation community, BasicMed will reduce barriers to entry for new pilots and help mitigate the pending pilot shortage.

The general aviation community plays a critical role in Montana's economy and connectivity. Montana has 126 public use airports, with approximately 4,300 general aviation aircraft, 4,100 pilots, supporting \$230 million in economic activity, \$73.6 million in payroll earnings, and 2,250 jobs, per the Aircraft Owner and Pilots Association and the FAA. It is of critical importance that Montanans be able to utilize BasicMed.

While Montana has refused to comply with the current REAL ID law, the state has made numerous security improvements to its driver's licenses, both the physical cards and the issuing process, without sacrificing our citizens' privacy or cyber security. Further, Montana driving records will remain accessible on National Driver Registry.

For these reasons, I request that the FAA continue to accept Montana's secure driver's licenses when processing airmen certifications until there is a solution for states that are not REAL ID compliant. Thank you for your attention to this matter and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES
United States Senator