



California passes requirements for flight schools

By Ian J. Twombly

Calif. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 48 into law last fall, which mandates FAA-approved flight schools satisfy certain requirements. Called the California Private Postsecondary Act of 2009, the law will require flight schools to pay a yearly fee and open their books to regulators. A hearing about how to implement the law is set for June 7.

The intent of the law is to protect the financial wellbeing of students who seek an education at a postsecondary school. If the school goes out of business, or is unable to fulfill its obligation to the student, the student is reimbursed a certain amount of money. To fund the program, Part 141 FAA flight schools will now be required to pay an initial \$5,000 fee, followed by a \$1,000 annual fee, and 0.75 percent of yearly profits to the program.

AOPA Director of State Legislative Affairs Mark Kimberling said it's important people understand that implementation of the law is still being determined. "Despite some speculation within the industry, the legislation does not specifically target individual flight instructors, and the effect on them is not yet clear," Kimberling said. "Yet it will clearly impact traditional 'brick and mortar' flight schools financially. While business accountability for flight schools is not necessarily a bad thing for students who invest in flight training, we want to be careful that this regulation is not overly burdensome to the point that the quality and availability of flight training in the state is significantly diminished."

A hearing on how to best implement the law will take place June 7 at 10 a.m. at the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, 2005 Evergreen Street, Sacramento, Calif.

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<http://www.aopa.org/advocacy/articles/2010/100519ca.html>