

# GA advocates urge Congress to support medical reform

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On the eve of a U.S. Senate committee's consideration of the Pilot's Bill of Rights 2, 17 aviation groups, including the [Experimental Aircraft Association](#), the [Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association](#) and those representing medical professionals and airline pilots — have signed a letter urging passage of the bill that would bring significant aeromedical reform. The bipartisan legislation, which currently has 69 co-sponsors in the Senate, is scheduled for consideration by the [Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation](#) on Wednesday, Nov. 18.

The letter urges the committee to include an amendment authored by Sen. Joe Manchin (D-West Virginia) that helps reform the cumbersome and costly third-class medical process for general aviation pilots.

The amendment also includes reforms to the FAA's Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) program and provides protections to volunteer pilots who fly in the public interest.

“The amendment stands to reduce barriers to medical certification in a manner that allows for the continued safe operation of general aviation aircraft while providing cost savings to both the FAA and the general aviation community,” the letter states.

The letter also reminds senators of the importance of third-class medical reform to the future of general aviation. It builds on the safe, effective, and successful standards introduced as part of the sport pilot rule in 2004, the GA advocates note.

“The FAA's medical certification system is currently both onerous and costly,” said Sean Elliott, EAA's vice president of advocacy and safety. “This legislation will maintain safety and allow tens of thousands of pilots to avoid the cost and hassle associated with the medical certification process as we know it today. We are closer now to this vital reform than we ever have been before, thanks to the support of GA groups, those in the aeromedical community, and thousands of EAA members and other aviators who have contacted their lawmakers regarding the bill.”

“Third class medical reform is long overdue and with 69 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate we have never been closer to achieving meaningful, common-sense, third-class medical reform, and this letter is indicative of the widespread support this measure enjoys from medical professionals, pilot unions, and the entire general aviation community,” said AOPA President Mark Baker. “Private pilots want and need relief from the outdated and unreasonably burdensome third-class medical process, which has simply evolved into a costly and bureaucratic system for pilots who fly for recreational purposes.”

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