**Airspace Over Disney**

Last month, airplane pilots received an odd safety alert. They were warned not to fly over Disney's theme parks.

The alerts were posted on the website of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The FAA is in charge of the skies over the United States.

The skies over Disneyland in California and Walt Disney World in Florida are “national defense airspace,” the alerts said. Planes flying over Disney parks could be forced to land. The pilots could be questioned and arrested.

These no-fly zones are known as temporary flight restrictions. Planes cannot fly near the president when he travels, for instance. Forest fires and large sporting events also often get temporary flight restrictions.

**Law Since 2003**

Yet there is nothing temporary about the no-fly zones over the Disney parks.

The Disney no-fly zones have been law since 2003. Defense and anti-terror officials did not ask for the Disney no-fly zones. Instead, the idea came from Disney and it pushed Congress to pass the law.

Michael P. Huerta is the leader of the FAA. Huerta told Congress that he would like to end the no-fly zones over Disney.

Defenders of the no-fly zones say the Disney parks deserve special protection. They claim Disney parks have a special place in people's hearts and attract large crowds. If airplanes could fly over Disney parks, people could attack them from the air.

Those who are against the flight ban say they would be useless against a terror attack. They say no-fly zones mainly hurt pilots who make their living by towing advertising banners.

**Disney Wins Its "War"**

In the long war between Disney and the airplane advertisers, Disney won.

“Banner towers used to make money with their banner tows around Disneyland. Now they’re not allowed to,” said Mark Skinner, owner of a helicopter tour company in California. He said the law is not fair. Planes can fly over other theme parks, such as Universal Studios or Knott’s Berry Farm in California, he noted.

Nearly 100 airplane advertising companies went out of business because of the no-fly zones at Disney and sporting events, said the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. The group is against the no-fly zones.

Richard W. Bloom is an expert at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Prescott, Arizona. He said the no-fly zones were not perfect. However, he called them one of the many layers of protection for American airspace.

Recently, Disney said the no-fly zones still were needed to protect park visitors. In 2003, though, Disney seemed to say that the no-fly zone law had another purpose.

Then, Disney spokeswoman Leslie Goodman said the law would keep out “banner ads” and prevent pilots from “buzzing the parks.”

**A Court Case**

The no-fly zones have been challenged in court, without success.

In 2003, the Family Policy Network sued the government to allow a pilot to fly its banner over Walt Disney World. The group argued that the no-fly zone was unfair. It pointed out that Disney did not own the airspace. It also said planes could fly over other theme parks and possible terror targets, such as downtown Chicago.

In response, government lawyers defended the Disney no-fly zones. They said the zones made the Disney parks safer for tourists and that Disney held a special place in the minds of Americans.

A judge did not agree with the Family Policy Network’s arguments. The law creating the no-fly zones was passed by Congress after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks. The judge said everyone must obey the 2003 law to prevent terror attacks.

Steve Crampton is the lawyer who fought the Disney no-fly zone.

Since the no-fly zones began, there have been no major terror attacks, Crampton pointed out. "I would say, today, that the case for protecting