

March 4, 2009

Senator Donald J. DeFronzo, Co-Chair
Representative Antonio Guerrero, Co-Chair
Transportation Committee
Connecticut General Assembly
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: S.B. 563: AN ACT EXTENDING THE MORATORIUM ON REALIGNMENT
BY THE STATE OF ROUTE 113 IN STRATFORD. (TRA)

Dear Senator DeFronzo, Representative Guerrero and members of the Transportation
Committee:

I chair the Connecticut Business Aviation Group ("CBAG"), a nonprofit organization that serves the needs and represents the interests of the Connecticut and greater New England business aviation community. CBAG further seeks to ensure that business aviation is seen as a vital and contributing segment in the overall aviation environment and economy of Connecticut. Our members include corporate flight departments, air charter and aircraft management companies, small businesses who own and operate aircraft, fixed base operators, individuals and entities that support business aircraft operations such as mechanics, cleaners, caterers, airborne medical support, law firms and others. We also have as members non aviation businesses who benefit from business aviation in that high value, time sensitive materials and individuals critical to their core businesses are transported through our airports, including Sikorsky. I provide these remarks to you in opposition to S.B. 563. This bill, if passed, would have devastating effects on safety, infrastructure and the Connecticut economy. It will negatively impact the businesses and livelihoods of our members, as well as our customers and the State's transportation infrastructure and economy as a whole.

Runway 24 at the Sikorsky Memorial Airport in Stratford (the "Airport") is in dire need of repaving. Like any pavement, the runway surface deteriorates over time and eventually needs to be repaved. Runway 24 is already in a condition that makes it difficult and expensive to repair. Repaving Runway 24 is an immediate concern

because at some point in the very near future, it will not be able to be safely and satisfactorily maintained. It has long required repaving, and the Federal Aviation Administration ("FAA") has a detailed, documented plan and funding to do so. The FAA plan and funding require that Runway 24 meet current federal safety standards. Those safety standards require installation of a runway safety area (RSA) - hence the need to slightly alter the location of Route 113 alongside the Airport (by approximately 300 feet) in order to install the RSA. This project is among the FAA's highest airport safety priorities on a national scale.

Supporters of S.B. 563 have argued that installation of the RSA will be an extension of the runway. The facts are to the contrary. Not only will the material used in the RSA collapse and require rebuilding when an aircraft taxis upon it, but the lawful, useable runway length will not change. In short, Route 113 needs to be moved in order for the RSA to be installed and Runway 24 repaved.

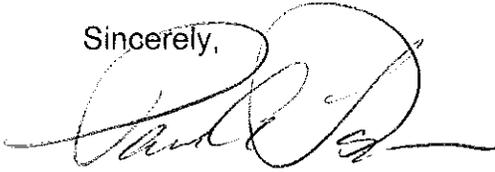
In addition to the above, the FAA's construction proposal actually benefits the Town of Stratford. Specifically, the portion of Route 113 at issue routinely floods and the road is closed during typical rain storms. The FAA's proposal eliminates the flooding on Route 113 alongside Runway 24. This benefit to the Town of Stratford comes in the form of already approved federal funding, funding which all of us are in danger of losing if the present almost decade long intransigence continues. The property to be used for the RSA and for moving Route 113 is currently an old, unused and neglected parking lot for the former Lycoming plant. It is filled with cracks, and has weeds growing through it. There is simply no reason not to take advantage of already allocated federal funds and a neglected, unused parking lot in order to permit necessary runway maintenance and the installation of current safety standards. Failure to do so will result in closure of the runway and its resultant harm to the many businesses that use the Airport and their employees who benefit from it.

Lastly, SB 563 seeks a third moratorium to supposedly study moving Route 113. Many of you have already seen detailed analyses and proposals prepared by the FAA on this issue. These proposals have been modified on several occasions to accommodate the Town's concerns. Supporters of SB 563 were granted two previous opportunities by this Committee and the legislature as a whole to "study" what they view as a problem. I challenge you to ask those supporters what specific study has actually been undertaken as a result of the opportunities that you granted them by statute for two years. In reality, no further study need be undertaken. Interstate commerce is vital to our state's economy. We need a freshly paved runway and modern safety standards to support that economy and to continue conducting business - especially in these severely distressed economic times. SB 563 is a thinly veiled attempt to severely curtail operations at the Airport to the point where it is no longer economically viable. In short, safety improvements are being held hostage to a political dispute between the City of Bridgeport and Town of Stratford over ownership and control of the Airport.

The members of the Connecticut Business Aviation Group, along with our employees and customers, respectfully request your help by opposing SB 563. Please

vote no when SB 563 is presented to you for your vote. The Sikorsky Memorial Airport is a vital part of our State's transportation infrastructure and economy, and it cannot be allowed to fail. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul A. Lange", written over a circular stamp or seal.

Paul A. Lange, Chairman
203-375-7724 or pal@lopal.com

Scott Ashton, Vice Chair
203-337-4605 or scott.ashton@gamagroup.com

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