



February 17, 2009

Honorable Members of the Transportation Committee  
Connecticut General Assembly  
Room 2300, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Legislators:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Economic Development Corporation of New Haven. We support the Tweed New Haven Regional Airport Authority's request of \$1.5 million in State support for ongoing operations.

As the Chairman of the Board of Directors, I see the value in making long-term and sustainable investments in economic development that build a strong transportation infrastructure. Economic prosperity and transportation infrastructure are intertwined. For example, JFK airport contributes almost \$30.1 billion in economic activity to the NY/NJ region, generating some 229,000 jobs and about \$9.8 billion in wages and salaries. Furthermore, the airport employs about 35,000 people.

The proximity to airports is particularly important when competing with Boston and New York City to attract emerging technology companies. Investors and their top-level talent require excellent airport access to support business growth and recruitment efforts.

Without a first-rate transportation system that includes a healthy Tweed New Haven Regional Airport, the region's economic growth prospects are limited at best. The movement of people, products, services and ideas is crucial to the Connecticut economy. Barriers to the movement of people are detrimental to business and the region's economy. These facts are demonstrated by 4.2 million flights made by passengers in Tweed's market area mostly from airports outside Connecticut—creating a huge lost business opportunity for Tweed.

I am well aware the State faces difficult choices due to the national recession and projected budget deficits. But now is not the time to have a short-term focus. Regions are doomed if they do not make investments in developing a first-rate transportation infrastructure. The increased financial support from the State to the airport is an investment in the long-term viability of New Haven County, which is home to over 845,000 residents and over 20,000 businesses. In the end, public investment in the airport will demonstrate the State's commitment to the region's economy and will spur business investment that will create job opportunities for many years to come.

In summary, Tweed New Haven Regional Airport has tremendous untapped potential as an engine to create job opportunities in the region. With the State's increased support, many small businesses from biotech, manufacturing, tourism and more will benefit from a strong Tweed New Haven Regional Airport. I welcome the opportunity to discuss Tweed and its economic benefit to the region in more detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Silverstone".

David Silverstone  
Board Chairman