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New Haven, Connecticut 06512
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**Testimony Before the Committee on Finance, Revenue and Bonding
Opposing a Portion of SB 25, An Act Authorizing and Adjusting
Bonds of the State for Capital Improvements, Transportation and
Other Purposes.**

Senator Daily, Representative Staples and members of the Committee, my name is Lori Hoffman-Soares and I am the Airport Manager of Tweed New Haven Regional Airport. I appear before you today representing Mark Volchek, the Chairman of the Tweed New Haven Airport Authority, who is out of the country. The Airport Authority respectfully requests that you reject and remove Section 42 of SB 25, which has very serious impact on Tweed.

As you may know, Tweed is one of only two Connecticut airports certified as Class I by the Federal Aviation Administration. For the past ten years, the State has shared the cost of many airport improvements, in recognition that Tweed has State-wide economic development value.

Tweed is the only transportation asset in the state run by a regional board of directors. The City of New Haven, Town of East Haven, and South Central Regional Council of Governments all support the Airport Authority in providing scheduled air service in a safe, responsible, and environmentally sensitive manner. The Transportation Strategy Board recognized this role by endorsing a strategy of support for commercial air service at both Tweed and Bradley.

We are asking the Committee to reject Section 42 of the bill, as this provision would repeal a \$5.0 million authorization for improvements and safety programs at Tweed. The \$5.0 million in capital bonds was approved by Special Act 01-2, Section 9(d)(7).

The Airport Authority achieved an important goal in 2009 with signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Mayors of New Haven and East Haven, endorsed in writing by five legislators. The MOA positioned Tweed to seek additional air service to provide more choices to Southern Connecticut travelers.

I am submitting today a letter signed by all the signatories to the 2009 MOA, agreeing that retaining the previously-approved \$5M in State bond funds is essential. The MOA proposes a variety of aviation improvements and community benefits to neighborhoods around the airport. Now that we have regional agreement on moving forward, the funding is more essential than ever.

When appropriated by the Bond Commission, these funds will be used for the following elements specified in the MOA. A portion of the funds may also be spent on airport safety and code compliance items, as required.

- a. Purchase an abandoned right of way at the south end of the main runway to install new instrument landing lights needed to grow scheduled air service.
- b. Remove obstructions in the approach zones at each end of the main runway, in accordance with FAA requirements and the approved Airport Master Plan.
- c. Plan and implement a Residential Benefits Program for Airport neighbors.

We join in urging you to retain the authorization for these \$5M bond funds because they implement an agreement between two municipalities and strengthen one of the few regionally-managed transportation assets in Connecticut.

Thank you for your consideration.



155 Burr Street
New Haven, CT 06512
P203-466-8833 F203-466-1199

March 4, 2010

State Representative Cameron C. Staples
State Representative Carlo Leone
Legislative Office Building, Room 3704
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Representatives Staples and Leone:

We write in support of the need to retain authorization for \$5.0 million in bond funds previously approved by the General Assembly for improvements and safety programs at Tweed New Haven Regional Airport.

The Airport Authority achieved an important goal in 2009 with signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Mayors of New Haven and East Haven, endorsed in writing by five local legislators. The MOA allowed the Federally-mandated Runway Safety Area project to go forward, positioning Tweed to seek additional air service to provide more choices to Southern Connecticut air travelers.

The City of New Haven, the Town of East Haven, and the South Central Regional Council of Governments all support the Airport Authority in its mission of providing scheduled air service in a safe, responsible, and environmentally sensitive manner.

The parties to the MOA agree that retaining the previously-approved \$5M in State bond funds is essential to achieving its objectives. The MOA proposes a variety of aviation improvements and community benefits to neighborhoods around the airport. We are not requesting *new* bond funds; we ask only that the existing \$5M in bond funds be retained in order to carry out the commitments in the MOA.

Tweed plays a vital role in the region's economic development. In fact, Tweed is one of just three Class I FAA-certified facilities in Connecticut. We are proud that US Airways provides daily scheduled service to Philadelphia and its 200 connecting destinations.

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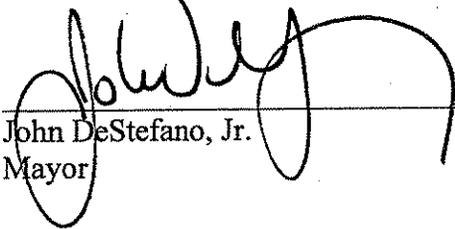
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c. Plan and implement a Residential Benefits Program for Airport neighbors.

We join in urging you to retain the authorization for these \$5M bond funds because they implement an agreement between two municipalities and strengthen one of the few regionally-managed transportation assets in Connecticut.

Sincerely yours,

CITY OF NEW HAVEN

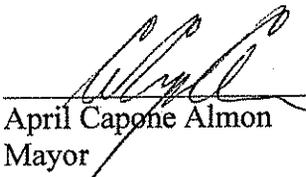


John DeStefano, Jr.
Mayor

3/4/10

Date

TOWN OF EAST HAVEN



April Capone Almon
Mayor

3/4/10

Date

TWEED NEW HAVEN AIRPORT AUTHORITY



Mark Volchek
Chair

3/4/10

Date

STATE LEGISLATIVE PARTNERS



The Honorable Senator Martin M. Looney
11th District

3/4/10

Date



The Honorable Senator Leonard A. Fasano
34th District

3/4/10

Date



The Honorable Representative Michael P. Lawlor
99th District

3/5/10

Date

Robert W. Megna

The Honorable Representative Robert W. Megna
97th District

3-5-2010
Date

V. J. Candelora

The Honorable Representative Vincent J. Candelora
86th District

3-5-10
Date

CC:
M. Jodi Rell, Governor
Robert L. Genuario, Secretary, Office of Policy and Management
New Haven Delegation

News > Metro

Bipartisan pact marks historic day for Tweed

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

By Mark Zaretsky, Register Staff

HARTFORD — The mayors of New Haven and East Haven stood side by side with Tweed New Haven Regional Airport officials and legislators from both parties Monday to announce a historic, bipartisan agreement.

The pact ends four decades of wrangling over the airport's future and will allow Tweed to complete safety improvements and ultimately expand service while limiting future physical growth, they said.

"Today's agreement marks the beginning of a new period of cooperation between the Tweed airport authority, East Haven and New Haven," said Mark Volchek, chairman of the Tweed New Haven Airport Authority.

"This is a great regional initiative — bipartisan," said New Haven Mayor John DeStefano Jr., pointing out that Gov. M. Jodi Rell is looking to support regional initiatives at a time when state money is tight.

"There are lots of 'thank yous' to everyone around," said DeStefano, although he reserved special thanks for East Haven Mayor April Capone Almon.

"Now East Haven has a voice — and that was something that was important to me," said Capone Almon after the announcement. "This is a very good day for East Haven."

She was joined for the announcement by East Haven Republican Board of Education member John Finkle — the town's likely GOP mayoral candidate — and East Haven Republican Town Chairman Carl Ruggiero in a sign of unity that sources said was important in getting the town to agree.

DeStefano and Volchek said they expect the agreement to have a positive effect on what is now a request for \$2 million in state operating funds for Tweed — up from an initial \$1.5 million in a year when Rell removed Tweed's \$570,000 subsidy from the budget she submitted.

Other speakers included state Sen. Leonard Fasano, R-North Haven, state Senate Majority Leader Martin Looney, D-New Haven, state Rep. Michael Lawlor, D-East Haven, and Anthony Rescigno, president of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce. State reps. Robert Megna, D-New Haven, and Vincent Candelora, R-North Branford, also attended, as did New Haven Aldermen Yusuf Shah, D-23, and Migdalia Castro, D-16.

Under the pact, East Haven, New Haven and Tweed will settle litigation over Tweed's federally mandated runway safety area project and complete the project. Tweed's main runway will remain at 5,600 feet, but the safety areas and removal of trees and other obstructions — in which East Haven now will be an active partner in accomplishing — will allow planes to use the full runway, instead of just 5,200 feet, as is now the case.

Future service growth will be capped at 30 departures a day, 180,000 boardings a year, six commercial airline service counters and the existing 700 parking spaces. The greatest number of departures Tweed has ever had was 21, and the highest number of boardings was about 135,000, officials said.

It also calls for a "good neighbor" program that will include sound attenuation, "traffic calming" measures and steps to better protect the environment. Financial benefits for the two host communities will be sought through additional passenger charges and an effort to increase state payment in lieu of taxes benefits to 100 percent.

East Haven, meanwhile, will see its presence on the 14-member, regional Tweed New Haven Airport Authority grow from two members appointed by the town's mayor to four. Any future changes in Tweed's service limits would require a three-quarters vote of the Tweed Authority, which according to Capone Almon, means "you couldn't do it without East Haven."

Fasano called the agreement "monumental" and said what's important about it is that people on both sides were able to put aside their personal biases and do what was best for the region.

"This agreement is very historic," said Looney, who represents Morris Cove neighbors of the airport. "It provides for Tweed to be a viable small airport," he said, emphasizing the three final words.

"This only took 40 years — not bad," said Lawlor, who lives near Tweed and said he "is fine" with it. "The people of East Haven have had some very legitimate concerns."

Capone Almon called the new limits on Tweed's growth "reasonable" and said it's important that "people understand what the parameters are."

Volchek said the agreement will allow Tweed and its host communities "to focus our combined efforts and funding on improving the airport infrastructure and being ready to take advantage of an improving economy next year. Tweed can be and will be a driver of economic development," he said.

Mark Zaretsky can be reached at mzaretsky@nhregister.com or 789-5722.

URL: http://www.nhregister.com/articles/2009/03/17/news/metro/a1_-_tweed_deal.prt

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