



OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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QUESTIONS FOR CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEE

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CONNECTICUT AIRPORT AUTHORITY (CAA)

- PA 11-84 created CAA as a quasi-public agency to develop, improve, and operate Bradley International Airport, the state's five other general aviation airports, and any other airports CAA subsequently owns, operates, and manages.
- The act automatically transferred the airport-related powers, duties, and functions assigned to several agencies except the Transportation Department (DOT), which operates Bradley and the state's other general aviation airports. It instead required the DOT commissioner to decide which of its airport-related powers, duties, and functions to transfer to CAA.
- CAA has many of the powers and duties associated with a quasi-public agency, including the power to execute contracts, borrow money and issue bonds, and hire employees.
- CAA is governed by an 11-member board, which consists of gubernatorial and legislative appointees and state officials.

- The governor appoints the board chairperson; the board elects from its members the vice chairperson and other necessary officers.
- The initial appointees serve four-year terms, except for two of the governor's appointees, who serve two-year terms. After the initial appointees' terms expire, all subsequent appointees serve four-year terms.

QUESTIONS

CAA's Quasi-public structure

1. Why was it necessary to shift the responsibility for developing, managing, and operating the state's airports from a state agency answering to the governor to a quasi-public one answering to a board of directors? What problem or issue does the shift address? How will it change the way Bradley and the other airports are developed, managed, and operated?
2. How will CAA's board know if the authority is successfully addressing the problems or issues that led to its creation?
3. Although the law requires CAA to develop, manage, and operate the state's airports, it stops short of transferring these airports to CAA. Instead, it requires the DOT commissioner to decide which powers and duties related to these airports to transfer to CAA. What is the status of the transfer? Which powers and duties has the commissioner transferred to CAA? Which powers and duties are under discussion? What are the outstanding issues? How long will it take to resolve them?

Airport Operations

4. Are Bradley and the other general aviation airports using the latest, cost-saving technology and techniques for moving people and goods through the airports?
5. How well are the airports marketing themselves? What is the size of the airports' potential market and what is their share of that market? What does CAA need to do to increase the airports' market share?
6. How are the airports' finances? Are they generating enough revenue to cover their operating costs, build capital reserves, and secure future CAA bonds?

Economic development and tourism

7. Given Bradley and the other airports' capacity and locations, what kinds of businesses could benefit by locating near them? Who currently markets and promotes such locations? Should CAA assume this function?
8. There are many public, private, and nonprofit economic development agencies and organizations operating at the local, regional, and state levels. What should CAA's role be vis-à-vis these organizations? How should CAA interact with them?
9. How should CAA interact with local and regional land use planning organizations, which determine the amount and location of land available for airport-related economic development?
10. How do the state's airports showcase Connecticut's cultural and natural attractions? How many out-of-state tourists come through our airports and how many are bound for Connecticut destinations? Is it easy or hard for them to get to those destinations?

Integrated Transportation System

11. Airports, like seaports and bus and train stations, are facilities connecting travelers or goods to other means of transportation. How well do people and goods flow to and from our airports?
12. Now that airport development has been or will be removed from DOT, how will CAA ensure that its airport projects are in sync with the state's other transportation projects?
13. Connecticut is proceeding with plans to improve rail service between New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield. How will these plans affect Bradley and its development? What impact will it have on the use of the airport, and how is Bradley planning for this? What role should CAA have in helping coordinate service between rail line and the airport? How can Bradley take advantage of the rail line to further its own goals?

Integrated Transportation System

14. How is the commercial aviation industry changing and how do these changes affect the state's airports? For example, are planes getting smaller or bigger? Do they require longer run ways? How are the airlines changing? And they adding or reducing routes? What do these and other related changes mean for Connecticut's airports?
15. How are energy costs affecting air travel and airport operations? How do these costs compare with those associated with bus, truck, rail, and ship transportation?
16. Looking 10 years ahead, how do you think Bradley's and the other airport's development will affect their respective regions? Do local and regional master land use plans address those effects? How can CAA help airport communities improve land use planning?

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