



Testimony Regarding

SB 339 AN ACT CONCERNING TWEED – NEW HAVEN AIRPORT

Submitted by

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CEO and President, Higher One Holdings, Inc.**

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Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrero, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of SB 339 An Act Concerning Tweed-New Haven Airport. As member and now Chairman of the Tweed New Haven Airport Authority Board I have had the pleasure of watching the airport complete numerous safety and service improvements over the last six years including the creation of grass runway safety areas, a part 150 Noise Study and the removal of trees at 200 properties eliminating obstructions.

As a pilot, I have welcomed these improvements. But I know we can be doing more. There are still handfuls of trees that require removal and since the 2009 instillation of the grass safety areas, industry standards have advanced, and we know that planes – especially corporate and commercial carriers – expect a runway with slightly more paved surfaces which enable the safety required to fly full planes.

The goal of the airport is to maintain its current level of service and attract carriers to key destinations like Washington, Chicago and Atlanta. As the CEO and President of Higher One, we chose to grow our business in New Haven. As the founding member of the Yale Entrepreneurial Society, I know many other businesses started here that elected to move – and one of the reasons is because of access to transportation. In order to attract service to these key destinations, we need to have paved safety areas as no new carrier will make the commitment to service at Tweed with the current load restrictions placed upon planes. Doing so will help us to attract and maintain business and grow the economy.

We at the Airport Authority want to be a good neighbor. It is important to note that the proposal before you will not expand the footprint of the airport which is now well defined by the recent addition of a \$1.5M wildlife fence. The proposal would not increase the size of our parking lot in which we recently invested \$1.8M – and reduced the number of spaces. What it will do is make the airport safer, quieter and more economically viable.

I urge your support of this bill.