

**Testimony of Richard Jacob,
Associate Vice President for Federal and State Relations, Yale University,
Concerning HB 7143, "An Act Concerning the Length of Runway 2-20 at Tweed-New Haven Airport"
March 4, 2019**

Senator Leone, Representative Lemar, and Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to comment on HB 7143, "An Act Concerning the Length of Runway 2-20 at Tweed-New Haven Airport." I am Rich Jacob, Associate Vice President for Federal and State Relations at Yale University. I am also a member of the board of the Tweed Airport Authority. I am testifying today on behalf of Yale University, which enthusiastically supports HB 7143.

This bill would allow Tweed Airport to begin the process of extending its runway to 6,600 feet from the current 5,600 feet. A longer runway will help to create jobs. New Haven and Connecticut have assets that can drive growth: a creative and energetic workforce, outstanding colleges and universities, and excellent quality of life, while still being competitive in cost of living with our closest competitors in Boston and New York.

However, New Haven does not have the transportation networks to support the economy that we all want. It is too hard for workers without a car to get across town to work. It is too hard to get to a good job in Stamford because the trains are slow. It is too hard for budding businesses to get to Atlanta, Chicago, San Francisco, or Washington to make a pitch to customers or investors. It is also too hard for visitors to get to New Haven.

Transportation is a vital issue for Greater New Haven's thriving high-tech sector, which includes such companies as Acuity Brands, Alexion, Artizan, Arvinas, Biohaven Pharmaceuticals, BioRez, Digital Surgeons, Fitscript, Melinta, P2 Science, Quantum Circuits, Inc, Technolutions, and Trevi Therapeutics, among many others.

There are also many high-tech companies that were founded in New Haven but left for Boston, New York, or San Francisco. Among companies that have left, transportation is cited most often as a reason for moving.

Allowing a longer runway would have broad effects on the New Haven economy. Currently, JFK and LaGuardia capture 63% of the passengers from the Tweed market; that money should be spent in New Haven, not New York. Tweed Airport estimates that a modest expansion of service, such as adding direct flights to Chicago and Washington, DC, would create 1,000 jobs and add \$122 million annually to the economy.

It is worth noting that enacting HB 7143 is just the first step in a longer process. HB 7143 would repeal the statutory limit on the length of the Tweed Airport runway, allowing the airport to begin an environmental review and other steps that are conditions of securing approval and capital funding from the Federal Aviation Administration.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. It would resolve the single most important obstacle to securing the commercial air service that will support the growth companies throughout Greater New Haven. We urge the Committee to approve HB 7143. Let's get started on growing Tweed to grow jobs.