

To the Chair of the Transportation Committee,

I am writing to voice my whole-hearted opposition to the expansion of Tweed Airport in House Bill 7134. I do not think the state should spend money on a futile pet project for the privileged. I grew up in East Haven, so close to the airport that I ran past it for cross-country practice from the old East Haven High School. I have friends and family in the neighborhood. We flew out of Hartford or New York City if we needed to, and I do not believe that neighborhood needs to be ripped, its environment destroyed, and its residents more polluted to change that.

Tweed is a vanity project. It has been a spot where elites from New Haven can fly in and out of. While the rhetoric is of the benefits of expansion, the 2009 Budget review panel called it “a significant potential financial liability for New Haven.” While this continues, our state is asking its residents to pay more out of their own pockets into the state budget. The newly elected governor has called for regressive tax measures, measures that hurt the rich and poor equally. He has proposed a toll for all vehicles, taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, and has asked give backs from unions. I am a proud public school teacher myself. As our Connecticut Educators Association President stated about the governors plans for our pensions, “The plan to shift the cost of teacher retirement contributions onto our cities and towns didn't sit well with Connecticut taxpayers, legislators, and municipalities in 2017—because it placed additional financial burdens on cities and towns and property owners—and it doesn't sit well with them today.” Money for an elite airport, at the expense of the local community, while the poor are asked to pay regressive taxes and their pensions are being attacked? From what I can tell, this looks like a case of reverse-Robin Hood.

In addition, we are in a time of dire climate change and species extinction. Elizabeth Colbert’s Pulitzer Prize winning book, *The Sixth Extinction*, documents how humanity is creating a mass extinction event whose consequences will be dire if we don’t act immediately. At the same time, we are suffering from catastrophic climate change that threatens our children's ability to live on a habitable planet. Why we would want to threaten the Morris Cove Wildlife Preserve to increase plane traffic in a failing airport for local elites while other perfectly good airports a short drive away? This sounds like madness to me. I can only imagine what it will sound like to our children.

I ask that you do everything you can to oppose House Bill 7134. Do it for your constituents, for the environment, for the community that lives there, and for the good taxpaying citizens who expect their government to work for them to improve their lives and safety.

Thank you,

Daniel Kwet