

I strongly oppose HB 7143, which would remove all limits on Tweed expansion. HB 7143 will effectively nullify the Tweed-New Haven Airport Authority Act, which currently limits the length of the airport's main runway 2-20 to 5,600 feet. Though New Haven and airport officials have promised an expansion to 6,600 feet and inside current fences, there will be no legal limit to expansion. Internal airport plans point to massive expansion by 2030.

Testimony from economic partners of the City of New Haven continually points to the importance of Tweed for "innovation" and "entrepreneurs" in Greater New Haven. No evidence is ever given, nor is there a strong commitment to the airport in its current state on the part of New Haven's large corporations, let alone startups and small businesses. Yale University, in fact, has been moving away from air travel as part of its environmental sustainability plans and has a preference for other airports in the Northeast region, including nearby Bradley International Airport. Should any testimony from Yale representatives on this issue be taken seriously, when there is no serious attempt on the institution's part to bolster the airport and fill seats on its current planes?

Though the City and Tweed may attempt to convince the State otherwise, Morris Cove and the East Shore are an important and integral component of New Haven's economic success in the 21st Century. The people who live in these neighborhoods are the City's most viable asset there, not the airport, and are perhaps second only to the ever-more-threatened wetlands and shoreline. Tweed's past expansion has already left a scar on this landscape, paving over marshes and coastal habitats that are not only home to a wide variety of resident and migratory species, but also protect *our* homes from the increasing impact of Climate Change.

Traffic in the East Shore is already a major problem, with cars being funneled into just two major arteries: Woodward Avenue and Townsend Avenue. Woodward already has roundabouts and residential parking, with cars lining the street on weekends and during Little League and soccer games. Townsend has both sides of the streets lined with cars each day, with the only access to Tweed being Hall Street, a street that now has speed bumps to keep traffic from flying past houses and threatening residents and their children.

Tweed, and any major airport with quick and easy access for fliers, will require a four-lane highway. Realistically, this would mean an actual exit off of I-95, not a byway through a RESIDENTIAL neighborhood. Tweed's continued expansion into a large international airport, which we are told is the only way for the airport to be viable in the longterm, will ruin the neighborhood and make it unlivable. And that's not to mention the impact on City parks and beaches, which all New Haveners currently enjoy access to.

Additionally, the impact of the new jet service that has been added has not been evaluated at all. The noise impact alone is now affecting residents such as myself who were not considered part of the affected areas in the last noise impact study. Upon takeoff, jets make a loud and noticeable BOOM, which not only shakes our windows but is has a noticeably negative effect on pets and children. If this is what we're experiencing now, what will we experience with more and larger jets?

Are Tweed's fantasies worth gambling the fate of our neighborhoods and families? Surely, there are more viable and less-risky investments for both the City and the State. New Haven residents and workers are obviously a more dependable source of tax revenue and economic growth than Tweed has proven to be over the past half-Century.

Thank you,
Cherise Labonte

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