



Ned Lamont
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

March 19, 2019

Sen. Carlo Leone
Rep. Roland Lemar
Sen. Henri Martin
Rep. Laura Devlin

Transportation Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2300
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Testimony from Governor Ned Lamont in support of HB 7143: An Act Concerning the Length of Runway 2-20 at Tweed-New Haven Airport

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Transportation Committee for raising this bill and continuing the dialogue on how we can expand opportunities at Tweed in a manner that benefits both the neighborhood residents and the regional economy.

To get Connecticut growing again, we have to get Connecticut moving again. The building blocks of the state's economic future are modern trains and highways that connect us to Boston and New York City, as well as convenient airports that connect our residents and businesses to the world.

As I campaigned across southern Connecticut last year, I heard from residents, small businesses, innovative start-ups, and large employers that the distance from their homes and jobs to a convenient airport was impacting their quality of life and their ability to attract and retain talent. Restoring even modest service from Tweed to destinations and international hubs like Atlanta, Chicago, Washington, D.C., or Florida will connect residents with their families and companies with the customers and investors they need to grow. A map of America's Fortune 500 companies, as well as my administration's recent conversations with Amazon, highlight the critical link between air travel and economic growth.

Unlocking that growth requires what this statute proposes: allowing the next step in the conversation about how to equitably expand opportunities at Tweed. Thanks in part to Pratt & Whitney engines, modern aircraft are quieter and more environmentally friendly than the propeller planes that used to service the airport, but they also require a longer runway to safely operate. I am dedicated to using the next steps this statute would allow, like zoning hearings, environmental reviews, and a hard look at the airport's governance structure, to explore how Tweed can fulfill its potential and fairly provide a benefit to everyone in the community. As always, progress will require a big table and an open door that welcomes those neighbors most immediately impacted by the airport into the conversation.

This is not a New Haven or an East Haven issue, it's a regional issue that affects the state's economy. I thank the committee again for its attention to the issue and this opportunity to share the perspective I heard from our constituents.