



# TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

INCORPORATED 1858

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## **Testimony in Support of HB-6426, An Act Concerning Recommendations by the CAA Regarding the Provision of Security Services and Meteorological Evaluation Towers**

Dear Senator Cassano, Representative Lemar, Senator Somers, Representative Carney, and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee,

East Granby is one of the four towns surrounding Bradley International Airport. As East Granby's First Selectman, I am requesting that HB-6426 be amended to include relief for the airport of legacy pension costs that make them uncompetitive in their marketplace. In my view, this amendment will better position the airport for robust post COVID economic recovery.

As our largest regional economic driver, Bradley International Airport is essential to our community by providing jobs, capital, and economic vitality. The Town of East Granby has relied on the economic growth that has occurred at the airport in pre-COVID-19 times.

COVID-19 has been devastating to the airport and I am concerned that Bradley will be left behind if it is not able to compete with other airports both in and out of our region. Airlines have indicated that Bradley Airport's fringe benefit costs are not competitive with surrounding airports. This puts Bradley at a competitive disadvantage when trying to regain COVID related lost services. The CAA is proposing minor adjustments to non-union retirement plan benefits which will translate to significant savings for the airlines. In difficult financial times, these savings provide an incentive for the airlines to restore their service at Bradley to pre-COVID levels. Airline investment at Bradley greatly benefits East Granby, the Region, and the State.

East Granby and its residents need a prosperous airport which is not struggling to re-engage airlines. Please consider JFS language that includes the CAA's recommendations related to retirement plans for non-union employees. I ask that you give the airport the tools that they need to recover from the effect of the pandemic on their business. A healthy and cost competitive airport will certainly drive economic growth in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

James M. Hayden  
First Selectman