

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2009

The Hon. J. Randolph Babbitt
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Babbitt:

We are writing in regards to the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in December 2008 for the proposed replacement of hangar 24 at the Bedford Hanscom Field. We have previously submitted comments to your agency expressing our support for preserving this historic structure as an aviation museum. We also have significant concerns about the deleterious effect that the demolition and expansion of hangar 24, as outlined in the draft EA, would have on the nearby Minute Man National Historical Park. Any increase in air traffic at Hanscom or vehicle travel along nearby roads could lead to adverse noise impacts on the park. As a result, we request that the FAA analyze the cumulative air and ground noise impacts as well as the impact that peak noise levels would have on the park during visiting hours before finalizing the Environmental Assessment.

According to comments submitted on the draft EA on February 20, 2009 by Nancy A. Nelson, Superintendent of the Minute Man National Historical Park, "further airport expansion would result in an increase of air traffic noise over the park and ground traffic along the historic Battle Road." We share the National Park Service's concerns with the impacts that additional noise would have on this national park, which serves an essential role in preserving the historic sites and landscapes where the American Revolution began.

We therefore request that the FAA further study the cumulative impacts of increased air and ground traffic on the park during the park's visiting hours, rather than averaged over a 24-hour period as was done in the draft EA. Further, we request that the FAA also examine the impact of peak noise levels on the park and its visitors.


Finally, in order to ensure that the Minute Man National Historical Park is not adversely impacted, we request that before the draft EA is finalized, the FAA and the Department of Transportation endeavor to reconvene the Hanscom – Minute Man National Historical Park Working Group. This interagency working group was initially formed in order to promote "the protection and preservation of the resources within the Minute Man National Historical Park and other nearby significant historic sites from current and future adverse transportation impacts in coordination with identifying and achieving the region's long-term transportation and land-use visions," according to the memorandum of understanding. Reestablishing this working group before completing the

Environmental Assessment would be the best way to ensure that the park's resources are properly protected while meeting the long-term needs of Hanscom field.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


EDWARD J. MARKEY
Member of Congress


NIKI TSONGAS
Member of Congress


JOHN F. TIERNEY
Member of Congress