



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
**THE GENERAL COURT**  
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

February 23, 2009

The Honorable Deval Patrick  
Massachusetts State House  
Office of the Governor  
Room 360  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Patrick:

It has come to our attention that two proposed projects at Hanscom Field are listed in the Transportation Task Force category of the "Infrastructure Mobilization Effort: State-Reviewed, Shovel-Ready Project List" and may, therefore, receive federal economic stimulus funds. These projects (Hanscom Airfield Rehab Taxiway M, G, and E – Hanscom Field – Bedford) include infrastructure improvements and expansion for corporate jet operations at Hanscom Field with a total cost estimate of \$9,750,000. Based on a lack of compelling economic justification, coupled with negative environmental and historic preservation impacts, we believe that these projects should not go forward.

As you know, the historic area surrounding the airport (which includes Minute Man National Historical Park, Walden Pond/Walden Woods, 8,000 acres of protected public open space, the homes of Thoreau, Hawthorne, and Alcott, and over 1,000 sites eligible for the National Register) was designated as one of *America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places* by the National Trust for Historic Preservation due to the threat of air traffic growth at Hanscom Field. We are deeply concerned that expansion of infrastructure at Hanscom will cause an increase in aviation operations and will further threaten nationally significant historic resources. We believe that the Commonwealth should prioritize infrastructure investments that protect and enhance the economic engine of tourism, in lieu of projects that threaten our historic resources.

In addition, we question whether these projects at Hanscom Field are "shovel-ready." There are serious questions as to whether the projects require review under the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act, and the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act.

Further, Massport reports that the use of Hanscom Field as measured by flight operations peaked in 1985 and has declined for the last 6 years in a row. It is reasonable to anticipate a further decline based on recent announcements by Bank of America, Citigroup, Wachovia, and other companies planning to reduce the size of their jet fleets. Under the current economic climate, we believe that the Commonwealth should invest in substantiated priorities; not in a hypothetical and uncertain need that is not supported by any measurable trend. In addition, projections of economic contributions from Hanscom Field do not appear to be consistent with the FAA methodology and, according to submissions made during the Hanscom Field Environmental Status and Planning Update, seem to overstate the economic benefits of the airport. The Commonwealth should invest funds in projects that clearly support long term job development and not those with an unproven link.

We are especially troubled by the fact that these projects at Hanscom Field support and encourage the most environmentally unsound mode of transportation. Corporate jets emit more carbon dioxide per passenger mile than any other form of transportation and cannot realistically be considered part of any long term solution for curbing carbon emissions. According to a recent report, private jets typically generate 15 times the CO2 equivalent per passenger mile than commercial airliners. We now have the technology necessary to move vehicle and rail transportation toward electricity generated from low carbon sources, but there is no known technology to reduce the carbon impact of jets. We believe that the Commonwealth should direct infrastructure funds toward modes of transportation that have the potential for long term carbon reduction – road and rail – that serve citizens of all economic brackets. We consider the use of federal stimulus funds to enhance the facilities for private and corporate jets to contradict the purpose of the stimulus legislation and to contravene President Obama's goal of 80% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, as well as the commonwealth's goals and those of the surrounding towns to reduce carbon emissions.

For many years, the four communities surrounding Hanscom Field (Bedford, Concord, Lexington and Lincoln) have consistently voted in opposition to expanding infrastructure at Hanscom, taking seriously their role as stewards of the unique and irreplaceable historic treasures within their boundaries, as well as citing their concerns of the financial, as well as quality of life, costs to the towns due to expanded aviation operations and land development. In a unique collaboration, the elected officials of the towns, state and federal representatives, including a comprehensive list of community organizations, have issued a joint document entitled "Hanscom at the Crossroads," which calls for the halt of infrastructure development at Hanscom Field.

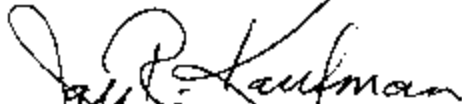
For the above reasons, we ask for your support in removing the projects at Hanscom Field from consideration for federal or state funding. Further, we hope you will join us in calling for a moratorium on expansions at Hanscom Airport and request your assistance in convening a meeting of stakeholders for the purpose of creating a shared vision for a sustainable and economically and environmentally sound Hanscom community.

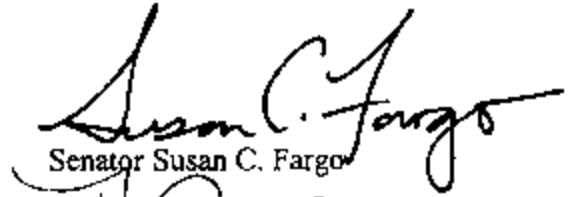
Thank you for your consideration.


Sincerely,

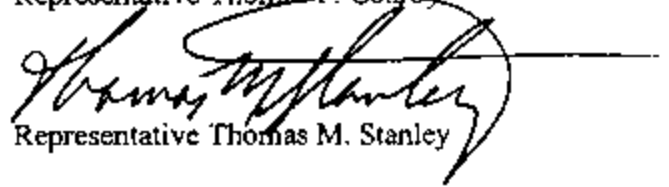
  
Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly

  
Representative Cory Atkins

  
Representative Jay R. Kaufman

  
Senator Susan C. Fargo

  
Representative Thomas P. Conroy

  
Representative Thomas M. Stanley