

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2009

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

Dear Governor Patrick:

We are writing with regard to two projects at Hanscom Field that are listed in the Transportation Task Force category for “Infrastructure Mobilization Effort: State-Reviewed, Shovel-Ready Project List” and may receive federal economic stimulus funds. These projects, totaling \$9,750,000, fall under the larger Hanscom Airfield Rehab Taxiway M, G, and E – Hanscom Field – Bedford, and involve infrastructure improvements and expansion for corporate jet operations. Due to insufficient economic justification and the strong potential for environmental and historic preservation impacts, we urge that federal stimulus funds not be directed toward these projects.

The historic region surrounding Hanscom Field was designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of *America’s Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places*, primarily due to the threats (noise, vehicular traffic, etc.) associated with increased aviation operations. In close proximity to the airport are 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. We are deeply concerned that infrastructure expansion at Hanscom will serve to amplify aircraft operations thereby increasing negative impacts to these nationally significant historic resources.

This area has been overburdened with aircraft noise and pollution due to a failure to embrace the concept of regionalization. We must promote collaboration among agencies throughout New England to develop a plan to share in the region’s current and future transportation demands.

We believe these proposed projects may 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 and, therefore, may not be “shovel ready.”

Based on Massport statistics, the number of flight operations at Hanscom Field peaked in 1985 and declined each of the last six years. Further reductions are possible based on recent announcements by Bank of America, Citigroup, Wachovia, and other companies

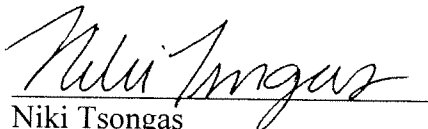
planning to reduce the size of their jet fleets. According to the Hanscom Field Environmental Status and Planning Update, projections of economic benefits from expansion at Hanscom Field appear to be overstated and inconsistent with FAA methodology. In the current economic climate, we believe that the Commonwealth should invest in proven transportation and infrastructure priorities that clearly support long term job development.

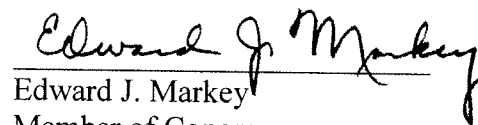
The communities surrounding Hanscom Field -- Bedford, Concord, Lexington and Lincoln -- have consistently voted in opposition to expanding infrastructure at Hanscom, taking seriously their role as stewards of the unique and irreplaceable historic treasures within their boundaries. These four towns have continually expressed deep concern over the financial, environmental, tourism and quality of life impacts attributed to expanded aviation operations and land development. Elected town officials from all four communities joined with state and federal representatives and a comprehensive group of community organizations in issuing a document entitled "Hanscom at the Crossroads," calling for a halt to infrastructure development at Hanscom Field.

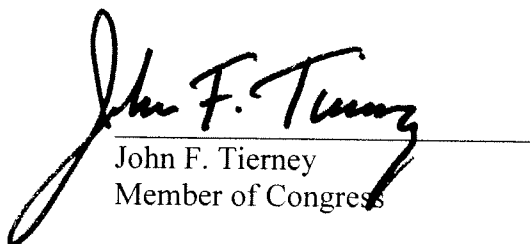
We deeply appreciate your support in allocating much-needed, economic stimulus dollars to the Commonwealth, and we ask for your assistance in removing the projects at Hanscom Field from consideration for federal or state funding. We hope you will join us in calling for a moratorium on expansion at Hanscom Airport and request that you convene a meeting of stakeholders with the objective of creating a shared vision for a sustainable, economically viable and environmentally sound Hanscom community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress


Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress


John F. Tierney
Member of Congress