

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We would like to ask for your assistance in protecting the birthplace of the American Revolution and an area of great historical and environmental significance. Minute Man National Historical Park, Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Walden Pond and Walden Woods, three designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, 8,000 acres of protected public open space, and many other historic and natural resources that are important to our national heritage and the tourist economy of Massachusetts face an uncertain future due to expansion plans at Hanscom Field Airport.

Massport, the state agency which runs Hanscom Field Airport, recently announced plans to double the private jet infrastructure at the airport. These plans represent a direct threat to the historically and environmentally significant areas adjacent to the airport from increased jet aviation and the resulting noise and air pollution. Due to the severity of this threat, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has designated the surrounding area as one of the "11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America."

Abutting the airfield is Great Meadows National Wildlife, one of eight national wildlife refuges in Eastern Massachusetts protecting land in seven historically significant towns. The Refuge provides important habitat for a diversity of native fish and wildlife and provides visitors with many wildlife-oriented recreational opportunities.

Nearby, the Minute Man National Historical Park is visited by more than one million people each year and preserves for future generations the important sites associated with the opening battle of the American Revolution, a battle that led to the founding of our country. Visitors are able to experience the sights, sounds and spirit of the landscape on which the revolutionary militiamen first fought for our nation's independence. Preserving the soundscapes of the Park is critical to achieving this goal.

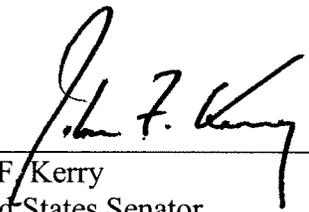
In 2001, President Clinton established a Federal Interagency Working Group to "promote the long-term protection of resources of the Minute Man National Historical Park and other historic sites in the vicinity of Hanscom field." Unfortunately, this effort did not make progress because it was created immediately prior to a change in administrations; it established no specific short-term goals, making it difficult to measure and achieve progress; and it could not resolve larger issues, such as defining the agency responsible for conducting an impact assessment. Having

learned from this experience, we believe that a more specific and focused approach is necessary to ensure the success of the working group.

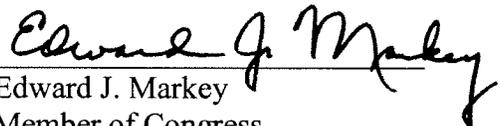
With this in mind, we request that you reconvene the Federal Interagency Working Group established by President Clinton with new guidelines and a specific purpose. Attached is a list of specific objectives for the Working Group proposed by an esteemed group of historians and preservationists including David McCullough, Ken Burns, Doug Brinkley, and Doris Kearns Goodwin among others.

We appreciate the need for and role that economic development plays in the health of our economy. However, historic preservation plays an important role in spurring sustainable growth, sustaining our tourism economy, and maintaining our quality of life. Vibrant economic growth does not need to come at the expense of the unique historical character and environment of our communities. We believe that with appropriate guidelines and purpose, the Federal Interagency Working Group is the best vehicle to make progress in supporting economic development without adversely impacting the surrounding natural treasures. We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to your response.

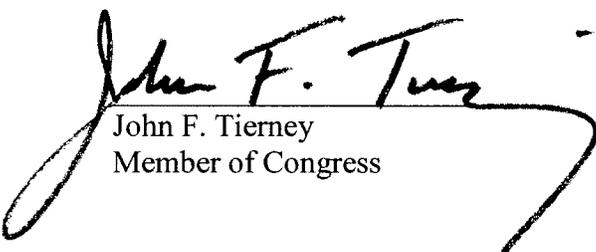
Sincerely,



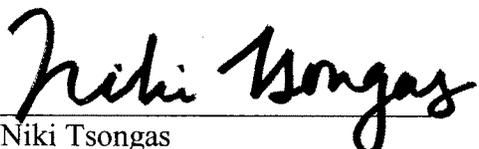
John F. Kerry
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress



John F. Tierney
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Enclosure: Objectives for Interagency Working Group



Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader

March 3, 2011

The President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write to express the importance of protecting the Minute Man National Historical Park, the birthplace of the American Revolution and an area of great historical significance in Concord, Massachusetts.

The proposed expansion plans at Hanscom Field Airport present a threat to the Minute Man National Historical Park, our national heritage and the tourist economy of Massachusetts. Plans to double the private jet infrastructure at the airport caused the National Trust for Historic Preservation to designate the surrounding area as one of the "11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America."

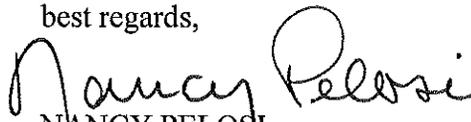
In 2001, President Clinton established a Federal Interagency Working Group to "promote the long-term protection of resources of the Minute Man National Historical Park and other historic sites in the vicinity of Hanscom Field." Unfortunately this effort did not make progress. It established no specific short-term goals, making it difficult to measure and achieve progress and it could not resolve larger issues, such as defining the agency responsible for conducting an impact assessment.

I ask that you reconvene the Federal Interagency Working Group established by President Clinton with new guidelines and a specific purpose. A group of esteemed historians and preservationists, including David McCullough, Ken Burns, Doug Brinkley, and Doris Kearns Goodwin, has developed a list of objectives (attached) for an invigorated Working Group that can protect the national park and its environs from the adverse impacts of development.

With appropriate guidelines and a clear purpose, the Federal Interagency Working Group can ensure that vibrant economic growth does not come at the expense of the unique historical character and environment of our communities.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

best regards,


NANCY PELOSI
Democratic Leader

Proposed Interagency Workgroup Assignment

Protection of Minute Man National Historical Park and Environs October 20, 2010

It is proposed that the Federal Interagency “Hanscom – Minute Man National Historical Park Working Group,” as defined in the existing MOU of January, 2001, (attached) shall be reconvened and tasked with the following specific objectives:

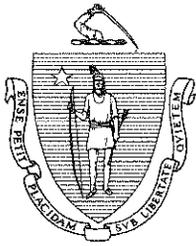
1. **In consultation with the FAA, the National Park Service shall define the appropriate measurement method to be used for assessment of noise impacts to Minute Man National Historical Park and other local historic sites eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, subject to the constraint that any metrics defined must be able to be modeled using the data sets from the FAA Integrated Noise Model.**
2. **The year 2010 shall be defined as the baseline year for noise impact planning purposes.**
3. **Future airport planning, regional aviation planning, FAA approvals, and guidance provided by the FAA and National Park Service for Hanscom Field shall be guided by the principle that projected noise impacts as determined by the prescribed metric shall be held to or reduced from the baseline value.**
4. **Planning mechanisms to control or limit the noise impacts shall be defined and studied, including but not limited to: means to mitigate noise impacts of operations; means to limit aviation infrastructure expansion; assignment of certain classes of operations such as ticketed commercial and cargo to other system airports under the FAA multi-airport sponsor program; means to encourage use of alternative underutilized airports for recreational and training operations; use of fees; fixed limitation of the airport layout plan; no further transfer of Federal land to the airport; and impact mitigating tower procedures. Feasibility and effectiveness will be determined to identify the most effective means (or combination of means) to achieve objective #3.**
5. **To provide assurances that any actions taken by the airport operator, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or the FAA to further these objectives shall not be construed to be a violation of grant assurances of Airport Improvement Program funding or any other federal funding.**
6. The Work Group solicit and integrate the inputs of the surrounding towns, and review their findings and reports with local, state, and federal elected representatives of towns for comment prior to release.

7. A planning document will be created that defines:
 - the noise impact metric and how it will be measured and modeled on an ongoing basis
 - describes the goal of maintaining the impacts at or below the baseline value
 - identifies guidance for means to achieve the goals
 - identifies planning and permitting processes and documents, including regional planning, that should incorporate this guidance
 - clarifies that actions taken to further these goals will not be construed to be violations of grant assurances.

8. The Interagency Working Group shall complete its work on this mission assignment in one year from this date; until then, construction activity related to infrastructure expansion should be deferred.

Comment:

The establishment of any numeric thresholds for impacts in National Parks and other sensitive receptors remains an area of some controversy among experts and government organizations worldwide. **Note that this mission assignment does not require that any specific thresholds for significant impact be defined, nor does it attempt to prescribe any particular controls, limits, or other means to achieve the objective. It simply requires that a plan be devised to hold impacts at or below current levels.** This assignment is clearly within the scope and intent of the original MOU. If at some future time, federal methods and metrics are established for determining impacts at National Parks and other historic sites, planning for this area should be updated accordingly.



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

December 8, 2010

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are asking you to take a critical and urgent step to save the Birthplace of the American Revolution. The battle sites of Lexington and Concord, Minute Man National Historical Park, The Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Walden Pond and Walden Woods, the homes of Alcott, Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau, three designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, Freedom's Way National Heritage Area, over 1,000 National Register eligible sites, 8,000 acres of protected public open space, and many other historic and natural resources that are important to our national heritage and the tourist economy of Massachusetts face an uncertain future due to expansion plans at the adjacent Hanscom Field Airport. We respectfully request that you convene the Federal Interagency Working Group established by President Clinton in 2001 to protect these National Treasures, and direct that Group to fulfill specific and essential objectives via the existing interagency MOU.

Directly abutting many historic and environmentally sensitive areas, Hanscom Field is a general aviation airport which primarily serves private luxury aviation and is operated by the state agency Massport. Recently, Massport has announced plans to double the private jet infrastructure of the Airport. Due to this type of threat, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has designated the surrounding area as one of the "11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America." (To be clear, Hanscom Air Force Base, adjacent to Hanscom Field, continues to be strongly supported by the surrounding communities.)

In 2001, President Clinton established the Federal Interagency Working Group to "promote the long-term protection of resources of the Minute Man National Historical Park and other significant historic sites in the vicinity of Hanscom Field." Unfortunately, this effort did not make significant progress because it was de-emphasized as a priority during the subsequent administration, it established no achievable short-term goals, and it was not authorized to resolve certain larger issues including defining which agency would be responsible for impact assessment. Learning from the prior experience, we realize that a better definition of objectives for this workgroup is needed. Therefore, we propose a specific mission assignment for a

reconvened Interagency Working Group, which is attached. We believe this is the missing piece that will allow this workgroup to be effective.

The lack of a regional transportation plan has led to piecemeal and uncoordinated development of this airport without a long-term vision or appropriate consideration of the special nature of the surrounding environment. The airport owner, Massport, states that they are actually precluded from working together with local communities to establish plans to limit impacts on historic resources, due to covenants in grant assurances provided by the Federal Government and due to existing FAA prescribed methods for assessing impacts. This is why there is an important Federal role in solving this problem. While we continue to support efforts for improved regional transportation planning, we believe that steps need to be taken now to better define and plan the relationship between this airport and the surrounding historic and natural resources. It has been difficult to effect changes on a local level, and this is why we are asking the administration to help us preserve these invaluable national landmarks.

In addition to previously stated preservation goals, we believe that this effort would also save costs in the long run, as ongoing lawsuits and appeals, such as the current 1st circuit appeal by the historic towns of the FAA approval of Hanscom Airport infrastructure expansion plans, have been costly. This endeavor would also preserve crucial tourism opportunities surrounding Hanscom Field and allow other, often underutilized regional airports to realize their full potentials.

For decades, thousands of residents of the historic surrounding communities and of communities from further afar, historians, environmentalists, and their local, State and Federal representatives, Scenic America, the National Trust, and the National Park Service have joined in unified opposition to expanded aviation plans that would increase pollution and noise over these historic landscapes. Years of collective efforts to establish protections for the area have not affected airport planning due to a complicated relationship between the FAA, The Park Service, and the Massachusetts Port Authority. We believe the already established Inter Agency Working Group is the best vehicle to make progress, but only if it is given appropriate executive goals and guidance. Thank you for your attentiveness to this request, Mr. President, and also for your ongoing leadership during these challenging times.

Sincerely,



Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly

4th Middlesex District



Senator Susan C. Fargo

3rd Middlesex District



Representative Cory Atkins

14th Middlesex District



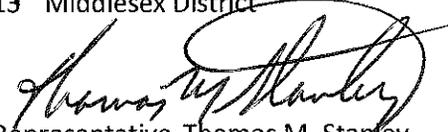
Representative Thomas P. Conroy

13th Middlesex District



Representative Jay R. Kaufman

15th Middlesex District



Representative Thomas M. Stanley

9th Middlesex District