

10/25/2007 - Sires Raises Questions About Potential Air Traffic Changes

Members of the New Jersey Congressional Delegation send letter to Department of Transportation

For Immediate Release

Contact: Olga Alvarez

October 25, 2007

(201) 222-2828

(Washington, D.C.) - {Today, Congressman Albio Sires sent a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Transportation, Mary Peters, voicing his concern for the proposed solution to the increase in flight delays and congestion at Kennedy Airport. The letter was signed by Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez as well as 11 members of the New Jersey Congressional delegation.

While it is important to look for viable solutions to help ease congestion in the New York/New Jersey airspace, a flight cap at JFK would only increase flights at New Jersey's Newark Liberty International Airport. The flight delays and congestion issue should be addressed as a problem of the entire region. The result of a flight cap at JFK would be an increase of air traffic at Newark Liberty thus having a dramatic impact New Jersey residents.

The text of the letter sent to Secretary Peters is as follows:

The Honorable Mary Peters

Secretary

Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Ave SE

Washington, D.C. 20590

October 23, 2007

Dear Secretary Peters:

We currently have an aging air traffic control system incapable of keeping up with the rising demand of air travel in the New Jersey/New York region. We share the Department of Transportation's (DOT) concerns about the increase in delays and congestion in the New Jersey/New York region, however, we have concerns about the approach DOT is taking by attempting to fix a regional problem with actions directed solely at John F. Kennedy Airport (JFK).

As you know, the briefing held recently with NJ/NY Congressional staff and DOT/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) staff made it clear that DOT and FAA are considering an option to "slot" or "cap" JFK. In order to be effective, any procedures imposed at JFK would have to be applied to all operations in the NJ/NY region and must be broad enough to cover not only U.S. commercial operations but also other users of the system as well. If JFK is slotted or capped and Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) is not, airlines (foreign and domestic commercial carriers and private

corporate jets) will have no choice but to serve the New Jersey/New York area by flying into and out of EWR. This will simply result in more delays, more noise, and increased emissions at EWR, which will negatively impact our constituents. Such an outcome would be unacceptable to all New Jerseyans and to those in surrounding states like New York and Connecticut that would also be impacted by EWR operations.

Furthermore, there would be a significant impact on the entire air traffic system as EWR is the fifth most important international gateway into the United States and currently the most delayed airport in the nation. To be clear, we cannot and will not support a policy that solves the JFK delay problem on the backs of New Jersey residents.

How the DOT/FAA resolves the congestion and delay issue is of critical importance to us, to the millions of residents of the NJ/NY region, to air travelers, and to the thousands of airline employees who work at our regional airports. We respectfully request to receive regular briefings from your staff and updates on the progress of the DOT in this matter. We also urge you to treat the NJ/NY area airports as a region and not individually when it comes to the imposition of slots.

Sincerely,

ALBIO SIRES
Member of Congress
13th District

FRANK LAUTENBERG
U.S. Senator

ROBERT MENENDEZ
U.S. Senator

BILL PASCRELL, JR.
Member of Congress
8th District

FRANK PALLONE, JR.
Member of Congress
6th District

FRANK A. LOBIONDO
Member of Congress
2nd District

STEVEN R. ROTHMAN
Member of Congress
9th District

JIM SAXTON
Member of Congress
3rd District

MICHAEL FERGUSON
Member of Congress
7th District

DONALD M. PAYNE
Member of Congress
10th District

RODNEY FRELINGHUYSEN

Member of Congress

11th District

ROBERT E. ANDREWS

Member of Congress

1st District

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Member of Congress

4th District

RUSH D. HOLT

Member of Congress

12th District

(####)