

## **NYAMA Participates in Transportation Budget Hearing and Advocates for Increased Airport Funding**

**ALBANY** -- New York Aviation Management Association (NYAMA) President Jeremy Martelle testified today at a New York State Hearing on Transportation held in Albany. Speaking on behalf of the over 13,000 NYAMA members and affiliate members, Martelle stressed the importance of airports in the New York State economy and advocated for \$40 million to fund the State Aviation Capital Grant program and a minimum of \$6 million to fully fund the Airport Improvement Program' matching fund requirements.

At the hearing, Martelle cited statistics from the New York State Department of Transportation's Aviation Bureau, which indicate that the aviation industry contributes over \$50 billion in annual economic activity in New York State and almost 400,000 State residents work in aviation or aviation-related industries.

"Airports are economic engines fueling growth in the communities they serve," said Martelle. "We can't stand by and let this critical engine be restrained by a lack of state infrastructure investment or competition from other states. Instead, we need to continue to attract and retain aviation related businesses here in New York," he added.

In order to meet the ongoing critical needs of airport infrastructure improvements and development, and to address these growing needs going forward, NYAMA is seeking State Aviation Capital Grant Program funding of \$200 million (\$40 million per year) over the next five years.

NYAMA also calls for fully funding the state Airport Improvement Program (AIP) by a minimum of \$6 million in the next fiscal year budget to ensure the State maximize the amount of federal funds that could be available for vital New York airport projects. This will ensure that the full amount of airport capital improvement funding appropriated to the State Aviation Capital Grant Program can be used for the important purposes of that program.

"The cost of addressing the growing needs of the overall transportation system is great, but will only increase if we delay action. New York State must invest now in effective aviation infrastructure programs or face much higher, perhaps prohibitive, prices later, when decay has made the challenges far worse," said Martelle.

At the hearing, Martelle cited the positive investments made by New York State to modernize and revitalize several downstate airports including LaGuardia, John F. Kennedy International, Republic and Stewart International Airports. Martelle also encouraged the state to consider targeted investments in other airports across the state, including both smaller commercial and general aviation airports.

“NYAMA and its members look forward to continuing to work with our other state elected officials to enhance our airports and aviation assets in ways that create new jobs, increase economic development and improve airport services so that all regions of New York can compete effectively with other states for business aviation and scheduled commercial service for the benefit of all New York’s citizens,” Martelle concluded.

NYAMA is a non-profit association of aviation professionals with members from New York State airports, State government agencies, planning boards, consultants, engineers, equipment manufacturers, and education facilities. NYAMA is devoted to promoting airport development and representing the needs of the entire aviation industry.

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