

Dorothy Scanlin
2 Sabal Court
Hilton Head, S.C. 29926
November 18, 2014

Katherine F. Veldran
Director of Legislative Affairs
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Ms. Veldran,

At an October 31, 2014 campaign rally on Hilton Head Island, I related my concerns to Governor Haley about a Beaufort County's planned expansion of the Hilton Head airport runway. She gave your card and said to write to you. As a resident of Hilton Head Island, and speaking for other residents as well, I am very discouraged that Beaufort County Administrator and Deputy Administrator continue to disregard the concerns of the Island's citizens and have continued to push for FAA funds by submitting a flawed study by the Talbert and Bright consultants.

This letter provides information that will question the proposed expansion. We also request that the projected funds allocated by South Carolina Aeronautics Commission for the expansion be removed. Please consider all these facts presented in this letter and forward to appropriate personnel.

- Any expansion of the Hilton Head Island Airport will cost South Carolina taxpayers an estimated \$1-2 million – *or more*
- Virtually *no benefit* will be accrued to the State as a result of this expenditure
- Question: Is this where/how we want our limited State resources allocated?
 - Numerous other State projects are being delayed/cancelled
 - Infrastructure budgets are being constrained/cut
 - State budget needs to be balanced
- **Recommendation:** Allocate State funds to more important programs/objectives that benefit broader South Carolina needs.
- South Carolina taxpayer share of HHI airport expansion costs will be 5-10% of total costs
- Total cost for HHI expansion options vary from \$19 million to \$52 million...or more
- FAA's share of expansion costs being reduced to 80% of total
- Unclear how State/Beaufort County will fund difference resulting from FAA funding down-scope
- SC State Representatives know where the funding issues are in future SC budgets:
 - Education (i.e., teacher staff levels, school facilities, etc.)
 - Facilities (i.e., state infrastructure, etc.)
 - State services.
- Over 97% of visitors to Hilton Head arrive by car

- Commercial airline market would ***not*** benefit from runway expansion – 25% of available seats are not sold now
- US Airways senior officials have told senior Beaufort County officials that “US Airways does not need the runway extended”
- Benefit values cited in Airport Master Plan prepared by Talbert & Bright are questionable
 - Highly inflated/overly optimistic
 - Unsubstantiated in a number of instances
 - Formal challenge to these Cost/Benefit Analyses have been made to County/State/FAA decision-makers
- ***Question: Why incur huge State costs when benefits to the tax-payer are negligible?***
- US Airways is committed to the Hilton Head market
 - With the current fleet of turbo-prop aircraft
 - With the current runway length
- Runway expansion options for HHI will not enable jet-powered commercial aircraft operations
 - Commercial regional jet aircraft operations require runway lengths much longer than those proposed for HHI
 - Commercial carriers are moving away from regional jet-powered aircraft – and toward turbo-prop aircraft – for markets like Hilton Head
 - Turbo-prop aircraft are less expensive to operate and maintain, and provide more operational flexibility
 - Next-generation turbo-prop models (e.g., Q-400) offer even more benefits – shorter runways with more passengers – than regional jet options
- Safety is not, and has not been, an issue: FAA continues to certify that current HHI airport is safe.

For these reasons we are asking that the following considerations be taken into account and funding for the runway expansion halted. Please . . .

- Defer/remove all funds for HHI Airport expansion from SC Aeronautics Commission requests; apply funds to more pressing State needs – infrastructure, education, balanced budget, etc.
- Question all assertions made by airport consultants (Talbert & Bright) relative to potential benefits from expansion – ***they are proven to be overstated***
- Question and substantiate all estimates made by airport consultants relative to estimated costs for airport expansion – ***they are proven to be understated***
- Set State’s priorities and objectives – what/when/how much, for airport-related expenditure of South Carolina tax-payer provided funds – based on solid, well-informed data, and not on the wishes of a small, private-aircraft owner group.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Scanlin (dscan266@aol.com)