



ASSOCIATED PRESS

April 4, 2008

Rep. James Oberstar, D-Minn., said FAA managers' actions displayed "malfeasance bordering on corruption."

Delaware County DAILY TIMES

March 21, 2008

Editorial on the FAA redesign issue

"U.S. Rep. Joe Sestak, D-7 of Edgmont, has his teeth into this one and he's not letting go."

The Philadelphia Inquirer

178th Year, No. 332

Sunday, January 18, 2008

EDITORIAL by Congressman Joe Sestak

FAA'S PLAN IS A FLIGHT OF FANCY

"[I] understand the economic necessity of an efficient and vibrant international airport. However, this plan was insufficient from the start, was plagued by inadequate management, and would not provide the flying public and those on the ground the operational efficiency and safety they deserve."

USA TODAY

March 7, 2008

"FAA needs to clean house from top to bottom," Oberstar said. "They need to take corrective action internally."

An Update on the FAA Airspace Redesign

FROM CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK



Congressman Sestak talks in the district about local issues.

DEAR FRIEND,

Inside please find: (1) information about the problems with the FAA Airspace Redesign plan, (2) a timeline of how I have been tackling this issue, and (3) ways to report noise complaints. This plan, which began a decade ago, has been flawed from its inception. It will have negative health, education and environmental repercussions as well as substantial fiscal costs that are unknown to anyone — including the FAA.

We must fix the following problems created by this harmful redesign plan:

(1) No Cost Benefit Analysis

This decade-long redesign plan has already cost taxpayers more than \$50 million dollars. When asked about the total estimated project cost, then-FAA Administrator Marion Blakey answered, I “don’t know.” Taxpayers have a right to know — especially since the plan has been estimated to save less than 30 seconds of delay per flight.

(2) Does Not Account for Health, Education or Environmental Impact on Communities

In its redesign process, the FAA did not measure the actual effect the impact that low-flying planes will have on health, education and the environment. Studies show that noise emissions from planes flying under 3,000 feet cost children one year of education from Pre-K through 12th grade and have the highest impact on cardiovascular disease. The Navy spends millions to study sonar noise effects on marine mammals. Amazingly, the FAA has spent nothing studying the noise impact on children.

(3) Raises Serious Safety Concerns for Affected Communities and Air Travelers

Recently, experts and agencies have characterized the FAA as having unsafe procedures and no critical oversight:

- According to NASA data, pilots reported twice as many near mid-air collisions as the FAA reported.
- A GAO report shows that near-runway collisions increased by 12 percent between 2006 and 2007.
- The FAA concealed maintenance violations by Southwest and Northwest airlines. We now know that Southwest used 117 planes that violated safety standards.
- Pilots at Philadelphia International Airport reported confusion about take-off routes as the FAA provided new departure headings after the planes left the gate — contrary to standard procedure — as part of the new redesign plan.

Even with these alarming trends, the FAA wants to rush execution of a flawed plan that air traffic controllers, pilots and air safety advocates believe poses undue safety risks. How can we trust the FAA?

The Way Ahead

This is a critical issue for me, my constituents and our region. We must stop this reckless redesign and see that the plan is redrafted with pragmatic, safe options that reduce delays — such as inter-modal transportation and/or using outlying airfields. I will continue to do all that I can — by Congressionally-mandated investigations and hearings, court litigation, and all other available means — to fight the FAA Airspace Redesign.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Sestak".

CONGRESSMAN JOE SESTAK

TIMELINE OF CONGRESSMAN SESTAK'S ACTIONS:

2007

JANUARY: Previously-established FAA Expert Advisory Board completed its independent study.

JANUARY: Held the first-ever town hall where the FAA responded directly to citizens about the redesign.

MARCH: Invited Congressman Costello, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation, to the District to discuss the redesign with the Advisory Board, government officials and community leaders.

APRIL: Briefed House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman James Oberstar on redesign, during which FAA Administrator Blakey admitted she did not know the cost of the plan.

MAY: Requested the Government Accountability Office (GAO) conduct an investigation over the true costs and impacts of the redesign.

MAY: With 2,000 constituents, addressed FAA representatives at an Essington town hall on stopping the flawed redesign plan.

JULY: Sent letter to the FAA demanding further explanation on how the redesign will reduce delays.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER: Worked with communities affected by FAA Airspace Redesign to file emergency litigation to stop its implementation.

DECEMBER: Held press conference with Senator Menendez announcing a legislative strategy to hold the FAA accountable.

2008

FEBRUARY: Worked with Senator Lautenberg to hold up Acting FAA Administrator Sturgell's Senate nomination.

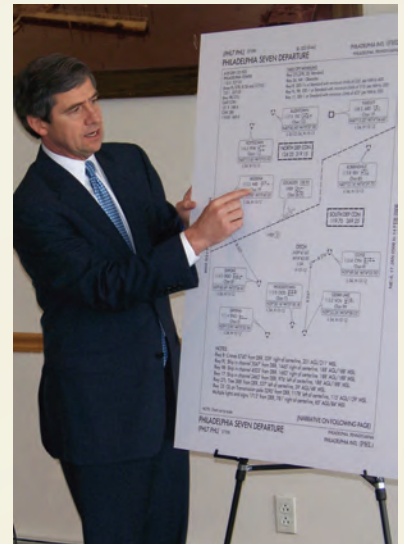
FEBRUARY: Joined the Philadelphia National Air Traffic Controllers for a press conference on safety issues after which an FAA spokesperson stated: "If any controller at the Philadelphia Airport believes that these procedures are unsafe, they should look for work elsewhere."

FEBRUARY: Held a follow-up press conference criticizing the FAA's blatant disregard for public safety as demonstrated by their comments.

MARCH: Sent letter with 19 other Members of Congress to the FAA expressing concerns over safety of the redesign and treatment of air traffic controllers.

APRIL: Testified at Senate hearing in Philadelphia, noting "The FAA rushed, and prematurely began, to implement this initiative last fall due to political pressure at the expense of air safety and the concerns raised by residents of Delaware County..."

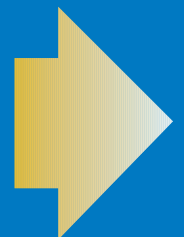
MAY: Helped gain support for Senators Dodd and Lieberman's insertion of a provision into the pending FAA Reauthorization Bill stating that the redesign could not be done until the litigation is completed.



Above: Congressman Sestak explains FAA flight path information at a recent press conference.

JUNE AND BEYOND...

This summer, I will continue using every means available to fight the FAA to stop the flawed and harmful redesign plan, and overturn a decade of a failed FAA process.



Congressman Joe Sestak
OFFICIAL BUSINESS
1022 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515


M.C.
Prsrt Std

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Noise Complaints:

To register noise complaints, please call 215-937-6750 and be ready to note the date and time of the occurrence, as well as the location of where it was heard.

For more information or help, please contact the following:

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

1022 Longworth House
Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2011
Fax: (202) 226-0280

DISTRICT OFFICE

600 N. Jackson Street
Suite 203
Media, PA 19063
Phone: (610) 892-8623
Fax: (610) 892-8628

On The Web:

For news from Congressman Sestak, as well as information on the FAA Airspace Redesign, visit his Web site at www.sestak.house.gov/services and click the links under "Information on FAA Airspace Redesign."

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