



TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

INCORPORATED 1858

EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT 06026

OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN

PHONE (860) 653-2576

FAX (860) 653-4017

March 24, 2021

Testimony in Support of HB-1079: An Act Concerning Competitiveness and Labor Costs at the Connecticut Airport Authority

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Hartley, Representative Nolan, Representative Datham, and distinguished members of the Committee on Appropriations,

East Granby is one of the four towns surrounding Bradley International Airport. As East Granby's First Selectman, I am requesting that HB-1079 be passed to provide relief for the airport of legacy pension costs that make them uncompetitive in their marketplace.

As our largest regional economic driver, Bradley International Airport is essential to our community by providing jobs, capital, and economic vitality. The Town of East Granby has relied on the economic growth that has occurred at the airport in pre-COVID-19 times.

COVID-19 has been devastating to the airport and I am concerned that Bradley will be left behind if it is not able to compete with other airports both in and out of our region. Airlines have indicated that Bradley Airport's fringe benefit costs are not competitive with surrounding airports. This puts Bradley at a competitive disadvantage when trying to regain COVID related lost services. The CAA is proposing adjustments to non-union retirement plan benefits which will translate to significant savings for the airlines. In difficult financial times, these savings provide an incentive for the airlines to restore their service at Bradley to pre-COVID levels. Airline investment at Bradley greatly benefits East Granby, the Region, and the State.

East Granby and its residents need a prosperous airport which is not struggling to re-engage airlines. I ask that you give the airport the tools that they need to recover from the effect of the pandemic on their business. A healthy and cost competitive airport will certainly drive economic growth in Connecticut.

Sincerely,

James M. Hayden
First Selectman