

Rep. Rothman Secures \$22 Million to Renovate and Soundproof Kearny High School

Nearly 2000 Kearny High School Students Will No Longer Have to Fight Noise to Learn

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2010

CONTACT: Aaron Keyak

office: (202) 225-5061

cell: (202) 905-6361

email: aaron.keyak@mail.house.gov

Kearny, NJ – Today, Representative Steve Rothman (NJ-09), a member of the House Appropriations Committee, was joined by Kearny's Mayor, the Superintendent of the Kearny School District, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, at Kearny High School to recognize their hard fought victory to secure \$22,030,000 to renovate and soundproof the school. Rep. Rothman has championed this project since the FAA first ruled that Kearny High School was eligible to participate in its airport noise mitigation improvement program in 2002.

"This is a great day for the students, teachers, parents, and taxpayers of Kearny," said Rep. Rothman. "Today's kids and all future generations of kids growing up in Kearny will be able to learn better and be more successful because of the renovations we are announcing today. The money for this project will come from the fees paid by the airlines and their passengers. There is no general federal tax revenue being used and this investment will create local jobs without adding a cent to our federal, state, or local taxes."

During an eight year battle to make sure that Kearny High School received these much needed funds, Rep. Rothman overcame intense bureaucratic obstinance and finally convinced the FAA to fulfill the promise it first made to Kearny in 2002.

“I am so pleased to announce that the Federal Aviation Administration will be spending \$22,030,000 to finally renovate and soundproof Kearny High School. After working with my Congressional colleagues, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and the White House, to ensure that the FAA fulfilled its obligations, I am now proud to announce that construction will begin next month,” said Rep. Rothman. “For far too long the students, teachers and administrators of Kearny High School have been forced to endure the deafening sound of aircraft landing at and taking off from Newark Liberty International Airport. Learning is hard enough without the roar of jet engines directly overhead.”

Rep. Rothman did not accept the FAA’s delays or its attempts to keep these important funds from Kearny High School.

“For the last eight years, there were many stumbling blocks put in front of this renovation and soundproofing — from disputes with the FAA over the existence of an airplane noise problem at Kearny High School to the FAA’s outright withdrawal of its commitment to this project. In fact, in 2008, the FAA notified Kearny that they had changed their mind and decided against renovating the school. This was unacceptable,” said Rep. Rothman. “In order to make sure that the \$22 million found its rightful place, here in Kearny, I worked with officials from ALL levels of the federal government. So today I am pleased to be able to thank the new FAA Administrator, Randy Babbitt, and President Barack Obama for helping make sure this promise was kept. Even if it took eight years to accomplish!”

Kearny High School is located just five miles from Newark Liberty International Airport, where there have been more than one million flights since 2007. The \$22,030,000 will be used to mitigate the impact of aircraft noise at the high school by adding a state of the art, central air-conditioning system, as well as soundproofing all windows and doors, plus installing a new heating and ventilation system at the high school.

###