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Measure Continues Prohibition Against Planes Over 100,000 Pounds That Congressman Secured Last Year

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman's (D-Fair Lawn) efforts to protect the quality of life for the people of Northern New Jersey took an important step forward today when he got the full U.S. House of Representatives to extend the federal ban on the operation of planes weighing more than 100,000 pounds at Teterboro Airport. In a 397-12 vote, the House voted to continue the ban, which prohibits the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) from lifting the 37 year-old, 100,000 pound weight restriction at the airport. Rothman first officially secured the prohibition against large jets at Teterboro Airport in January 2004 after the FAA threatened to allow larger planes such as the 737 Boeing Business Jet to operate at the Northern New Jersey airport.

"Once again, the U.S. House of Representatives has recognized that large jets such as the Boeing Business Jet don't belong at Teterboro Airport," Rothman said. "I am pleased that my House colleagues understand that stopping oversized planes from using Teterboro Airport is critical to protecting the quality of life for the people of Northern New Jersey. We do not want or need these enormous aircraft flying right over our homes and disrupting our daily lives. By extending the ban on the Boeing Business Jet and other large aircraft at Teterboro Airport, those planes will be limited to operating at JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark, which is where they belong."

Rothman used his position on the House Appropriations Committee to get that panel to approve the extension of the large jet ban on July 22. The Congressman's efforts to institute a federal ban on large jets at Teterboro began in July 2003, when the FAA announced its intention to overturn the facility's weight limit despite strong opposition from local residents and elected officials. As a lifelong resident of Bergen County who is committed to fighting aircraft noise and stopping the expansion of Teterboro Airport, Rothman vehemently opposed the proposal and wrote legislation to stop the FAA from going forward with its plan. He got the measure passed through the House and enlisted the help of U.S. Senators Jon Corzine (D-NJ) and Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) to get the measure approved in the Senate. The measure became law in January of 2004. The bill that passed the House today is identical to the measure signed into law in January and would extend the ban for another full year. Senators Corzine and Lautenberg are again helping to pass identical legislation in the Senate.

Rothman's provision is part of the Transportation and Treasury Appropriations bill, an annual spending bill, which funds the FAA. The Congressman's provision specifically prohibits the FAA from spending any money during the fiscal year to lift the 100,000 weight restriction at Teterboro, thus preventing larger jets from using the airport. Since appropriations bills are enacted annually and the FAA is funded for one year at a time, Rothman's provision is only in effect for one year and has to be renewed annually. The Transportation and Treasury Appropriations bill has been the only legislative vehicle available to Rothman to secure a federal ban on oversized jets at Teterboro airport since the FAA first threatened to lift the weight restriction last year. Despite that, the Congressman has said that he continues to look for legislative opportunities to make the annual ban either permanent or multi-year.

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[Go back](#)

