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Lautenberg, Corzine Helped Congressman's Language Pass Senate

Teterboro, NJ - Following through on his promise to prevent Teterboro Airport from being turned into the New York Metropolitan area's fourth major airport and to protect the quality of life for local residents, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that his measure to permanently ban scheduled charter service at Teterboro Airport was signed into law by President Bush last Friday. The provision, which is part of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization bill, closes the loophole that allowed charter aircraft, most recently Indigo Airlines, to operate at Teterboro Airport on a regular, scheduled basis. Rothman credited U.S. Senators Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Jon Corzine (D-NJ) with helping to ensure Senate approval of the provision he authored.

"The threat of Teterboro Airport becoming the New York Metropolitan area's fourth major airport, with planes taking off and landing on a scheduled basis, is gone now that my legislation is law," Rothman said. "The loophole that Indigo Airlines tried to exploit to offer scheduled charter service at little Teterboro Airport has been eliminated and the quality of life for the people of Northern New Jersey has been protected. I am very pleased that I was able to get my legislation passed through the Congress and signed into law so that the people of our region won't have Bergen County's general aviation airport turned into a much larger facility with planes operating on a regular schedule. This scheduled charter ban is what the people of Northern Jersey demanded and I am very happy to deliver it to them."

Rothman authored the provision included in the FAA Reauthorization bill after Indigo Airlines began operating scheduled charter service between Teterboro Airport and Midway Airport in Chicago, Illinois. Despite a local rule barring scheduled service at Teterboro Airport, Indigo Airlines used a loophole in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations to initiate scheduled charter service there twice during the last three years. While Indigo suspended its service at Teterboro in June, until now the loophole remained for any copycat service to start operating at Teterboro Airport. Rothman's provision, which closes the loophole and prevents any other scheduled charter service from operating at Teterboro Airport, passed the House in June. Rothman then reached out to Senators Lautenberg and Corzine to ask them to ensure that the Senate would approve this provision in the final version of the FAA Reauthorization bill. Lautenberg and Corzine were instrumental in making sure the Rothman provision that passed the House was also approved by the Senate.

"Ensuring that Teterboro is properly utilized is as much a quality of life issue as it is a transportation issue," Senator Corzine said. "The New York - New Jersey metropolitan region is unique in that it has three major airports within 25 miles of Teterboro. This region does not need a fourth major airport."

Senator Lautenberg said, "If an airline wants to fly to North Jersey, they are welcome at Newark-Liberty, but not Teterboro. I fought hard to close this loophole to protect the integrity of Teterboro's role as a general aviation airport and to neighborhoods nearby."

In an effort to get the federal government to stop scheduled charter service through an executive branch administrative ruling, Rothman earlier this year met personally with U.S. Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta, spoke daily with U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Administrator, Admiral James Loy, and met and spoke on a daily basis with other top Department of Transportation and Department of Homeland Security officials. Rothman persuaded Secretary Mineta to write a letter to Admiral Loy asking for the TSA to review Indigo's operations at Teterboro Airport because the airline posed a threat to the region.

"I am very grateful that our Senators, Frank Lautenberg and Jon Corzine, worked so hard to ensure that my provision barring scheduled charter service at Teterboro Airport survived several legislative steps in Congress," Rothman added. "They have been outstanding partners in our fight against aircraft noise and airport expansion at Teterboro and to protect the quality of life of our area's residents."

While discussing the ban on scheduled charter service at Teterboro Airport, Rothman also announced that his separate legislation to prevent the FAA from overturning the 36 year-old, 100,000 pound weight limit at Teterboro Airport passed the House last week. The legislation would keep huge jets such as the 737 Boeing Business Jet out of Teterboro Airport. Rothman warned that complete victory has yet to be achieved because the Senate still needs to take up the measure

when it reconvenes in January.

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