

ALCEE L. HASTINGS
23RD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
FLORIDA

PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE
VICE-CHAIRMAN

RULES COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE
AND BUDGET PROCESS
CHAIRMAN

UNITED STATES
HELSINKI COMMISSION
CO-CHAIRMAN

FLORIDA DELEGATION
CO-CHAIRMAN

SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0923

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

- 2353 RAYBURN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0923
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-1313
FAX: (202) 225-1171
- 2701 W. OAKLAND PARK BOULEVARD
SUITE 200
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33311
TELEPHONE: (954) 733-2800
FAX: (954) 735-9444
- MANGONIA PARK TOWN HALL
1755 E. TIFFANY DRIVE
MANGONIA PARK, FL 33407
TELEPHONE: (561) 881-9618
FAX: (561) 881-9879

www.alceehastings.house.gov

January 20, 2011

Mr. J. Randolph Babbitt
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Babbitt:

I write to request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) concur with a two-year lease extension of Lockhart Stadium, located at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, to the School Board of Broward County. For the past 25 years, Lockhart Stadium has been home to several area school teams and a popular venue for community sporting events. Allowing the School Board's current lease to expire on June 30, 2011, will have a detrimental effect on thousands of students, parents, and residents in my Congressional district and neighboring communities.

Lockhart Stadium embodies both the school spirit of the students who play there as well as that of the Fort Lauderdale community. Fort Lauderdale, Stranahan, and Dillard High Schools utilize Lockhart as their home stadium, which makes up a central component of the interscholastic programs of several Broward County schools. In fact, Lockhart Stadium is host to many high school and community sporting events that regularly attract 6,000 spectators per game, as well as multiple high and middle school soccer events, high school combines, and competitions. Furthermore, major high school athletic events such as state playoff football games, the BCAA All-Star Football Classic, SOUL Bowl Game, All-Star Soccer Game, and All-Star Flag Football Game are also played there.

As you know, the FAA did not concur with the City of Fort Lauderdale's May 18, 2010, request for a five-year lease extension of Lockhart Stadium, citing its plan for future use of the property including the conversion of the site from parkland to an airport zoning designation.

While I recognize the FAA's prerogative to utilize and develop this property, given the considerable impact that this would have on area schools and the greater community, I respectfully ask that the City of Fort Lauderdale be granted a two-year lease extension so that it may prepare together with Executive Airport staff and the School Board of Broward County a plan for the management of the stadium.

In addition, given overextended city budgets and major reductions to education funding during this difficult economic time, I also ask that the FAA extend the current lease at the current rate. The City of Fort Lauderdale, in support of high school sports, has maintained this cooperative lease arrangement with Lockhart Stadium and its partnership with the School Board over the years to ensure that students have access to a quality athletic facility. Unfortunately, previous efforts to construct new on-campus stadiums at Stranahan and other Broward County high schools have been cancelled, as the capital construction of athletic facilities has been significantly reduced. Lockhart Stadium therefore remains the sole athletic facility providing access and stability to these schools and the greater community.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. It is my sincere hope that the FAA will continue to support interscholastic sports and the Fort Lauderdale community by concurring with this short-term lease extension. Consequently, I respectfully ask to be kept informed of the overall progress of this request. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress