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SECOND DISTRICT, OHIO

TRANSPORTATION AND
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The Honorable Mark Mallory
Mayor
City Hall
801 Plum Street, Room 150
Cincinnati, OH 45202-1979

Re: Maintaining Blue Ash Airport

Dear Mayor Mallory:

I am writing to express my concerns about the Blue Ash Airport.

Blue Ash Airport has been designated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a reliever airport, as it alleviates congestion at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport. Approximately 137 aircraft are based at Blue Ash, and the airport averages 40,000 operations a year on its 3,500-foot runway.

The City of Cincinnati has owned and operated the airport since 1946. Until recently, I believe this arrangement has well served the community of Blue Ash, the airport's users, and the City of Cincinnati. But local pilots have begun to voice strong concerns regarding the lack of maintenance needed to ensure safety at Blue Ash Airport.

In researching this issue, I learned that the Ohio Department of Transportation conducted a pavement inspection at Blue Ash Airport in 2003. Its findings, recorded in a letter dated September 10, 2003, listed the following items as needing attention:

- Pavement repair on the 6 approach end of the runway;
- Rehabilitation of aprons A, B, C, and D; and
- Crack seal all pavements as needed.

But most concerning was the statement, "We did not observe any preventive maintenance on your airport pavements." I understand that no action has yet been taken on these recommendations, and pilots at Blue Ash Airport report that the conditions are now worse than they were three years ago.

Having served as a township trustee, I know that lack of funding often impedes local efforts to undertake projects such as those needed at Blue Ash Airport. However, I understand that funding is available through the FAA's Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Because the City of Cincinnati has not requested to use any of Blue Ash Airport's entitlement funding for quite some time, up to \$600,000 is now available. Although a

five percent local match would be required, AIP grants provide a 95% federal investment to general aviation facilities like Blue Ash Airport.

Blue Ash Airport is an important aviation asset in my district. I urge you to take advantage of the FAA's AIP funding to provide the repairs and maintenance needed to keep the airport safe. Please be aware that time is of the essence. In order to provide a grant this year, the FAA will need to receive the City of Cincinnati's AIP grant application within the next few weeks. Please let me know how the City plans to proceed on this matter; should your staff have any questions or need assistance in this process, my office is ready to help.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Schmidt', written in a cursive style.

Jean Schmidt
Representative