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January 5, 2010

Mr. James R. Cordes, County Administrator  
Lorain County  
Administration Building  
226 Middle Avenue  
Elyria, OH 44035

Dear Mr. Cordes:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 415,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots, including nearly 13,200 members in the State of Ohio. AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and economic development of general aviation airports and their facilities as a vital part of a state and national transportation system.

Based on information we have received from local AOPA members and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), it is our understanding that Lorain County intends to cease operations and close the Lorain County Regional Airport (LPR) effective January 15, 2010. We have reviewed Assistant County Administrator Twining's December 14, 2009 letter to the FAA noticing the intent to close the airport and our staff has spoken with him directly. We are also in receipt of two letters to the County from the FAA on this subject indicating the agency will take appropriate actions to ensure the airport remains accessible to the public.

AOPA is strongly opposed to the permanent closure of the Lorain County Regional Airport and encourages the County to work with the FAA and State Aviation Office in keeping the airport open.

As you already know, the County has accepted a significant amount of federal airport development funding under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Those funds carry federal obligations, Grant Assurances, as codified in law and contained in Title 49 US Code § 47107.

These assurances are a contract between the local airport sponsor and the federal government. While we can appreciate the County's projected fiscal deficit this coming year, that doesn't relieve the County of their obligations to the federal government.

Airports play an important role in providing economic development to the local area. According to a State of Ohio Airport Economic Impact Report ([http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Aviation/Documents/Airport%20System%20Plan%20for%20Ohio/Economic%20Impact%20MAIN%20REPORT06\[1\].pdf](http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/TransSysDev/Aviation/Documents/Airport%20System%20Plan%20for%20Ohio/Economic%20Impact%20MAIN%20REPORT06[1].pdf)), LPR accounts

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for 333 jobs and has an annual total economic impact of \$37 million. The stimulus to the local economy far outweighs the County's annual contribution to operating the airport.

Airports must be viewed much more broadly than a simple balance sheet since their impact far exceeds the physical property of the airport. The same holds true for the interstate highway system.

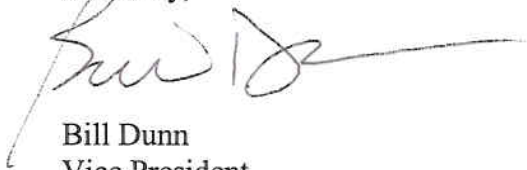
Just as exit ramps from Interstate Highways 80 and 90 provide access to the local area, so too does Lorain County Regional Airport. The primary difference is that airports are an exit/entrance ramp to a national transportation system in the sky. Would the County consider limiting local access by closing an interstate highway ramp? Doubtful.

LPR plays a vital role in our national and state air transportation system.

AOPA is prepared to take necessary actions to insure the airport remains open and available to public use.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact my office at 301-695-2205 or by e-mail at [bill.dunn@aopa.org](mailto:bill.dunn@aopa.org).

Sincerely,



Bill Dunn  
Vice President  
Local Airport Advocacy

cc: Commissioner Betty Blair  
Commissioner Ted Kalo  
Commissioner Lori Kokoski  
John Mayfield  
FAA Detroit ADO