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October 11, 2017

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo

Governor, New York

Executive Chamber

State Capitol

Albany, New York 12224

**RE: Urge Veto of A.5523 East Hampton
Airport Permissive Referendum**

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing as President of the New York Aviation Management Association to urge you to veto the above captioned legislation that threatens aviation access, safety and the economic viability of a dynamic and vital airport in this state.

The legislation will create a state mandate that certain funding decisions regarding the East Hampton Airport (HTO) would need to be made, not by a majority vote of the East Hampton Town Board, but by permissive referendum only.

This bill would set a dangerous precedent negatively impacting an airport that is economically vibrant and strategically important to communities on Long Island. HTO is an essential part of the state's and Nation's integrated system of airports. It is currently home to over 100 based aircraft and hosts more than 25,000 general aviation operations annually.

HTO provides a variety of transportation options, promotes regional tourism, and is a base for launching medical, fire and other emergency services.

Further, as a matter of public policy, you should veto this legislation that would allow the desires of a few current East Hampton Town Board members to erect procedural barriers in state statute for future duly elected town boards to overcome in order to exercise their decision-making authority over this important regional asset; in this case a vibrant transportation hub and economic engine for the region and the state.

It is important to note that, should you veto this bill, your action would have no impact on the current Board's authority to refuse state and federal funding for the airport, put the question to referendum or, as is being contemplated, vote to close the airport within the next few years. The sole intent of this legislation is to tie the hands of a successive Board that may want to undo the devastating regional, state and federal consequences of the current Board's plan to starve the airport of funding and assure its demise.

Thank you for your consideration. I am available to provide additional information and meet with you and your staff again if necessary.

Sincerely,



Lee Weitz, NYAMA President