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## NYAMA President Tells Transportation Budget Hearing Airports Need Funding Restored

ALBANY (January 20, 2016) – Saying the aviation industry contributes more than \$50 billion in annual economic activity in New York State, New York Aviation Management Association (NYAMA) President Jeremy Martelle today urged lawmakers to boost funding for two critical aviation programs.

Martelle testified in Albany today at a New York State Budget Hearing on Transportation and noted the State Aviation Capital Grant Program had been funded at a level of \$15M-\$17M a year until 2010. In the 2010 through 2013 fiscal years, there was no capital improvement funding. Funding has since returned, but at a level less than \$10 million annually. “In order to meet the ongoing critical needs of airport infrastructure improvement,” Martelle said, “NYAMA is requesting \$200 million over five years for the State Aviation Capital Grant Program.”

NYAMA is also seeking to end the under-funding of the Airport Capital Improvement Program. It anticipates the \$4 million allocation in the proposed budget will fall short of the need, and is seeking a minimum of \$6 million in the next state budget.

“The cost of addressing the growing needs of the overall transportation system is great, but will only increase if we delay action”, Martelle said. “New York State must invest now in effective aviation infrastructure programs or face much higher, perhaps prohibitive, prices later when decay has made the challenges far worse.”

Martelle thanked the legislature for enacting significant aviation tax reform last year that enabled New York airports to restore their competitiveness with neighboring states. He also praised the Executive Budget’s Upstate Airport Initiative, where Governor Cuomo is proposing \$200M for an Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition, aimed at boosting investment in commercial passenger and cargo service airports and in turn create jobs and stimulate economic development. The initiative calls for the State to award five airports approximately \$40 million apiece.

While welcoming the upstate initiative, Martelle told lawmakers he is concerned many of NYANA’s upstate airports will not be able to fairly compete for the funding. “NYAMA is anxious to work with you and the Governor to assure that this significant infrastructure funding reaches airports that establish the need for support, enhances aviation business development, creates new and permanent jobs and improves the state’s economy as a whole, he said.”

NYAMA is a non-profit association of aviation professionals with members from New York State airports, State government agencies, planning boards, consultants, engineers, equipment manufacturers, and education facilities. NYAMA is devoted to promoting airport development and representing the needs of the entire aviation industry.