



TOWN OF DURHAM
8 NEWMARKET ROAD
DURHAM, NH 03824
Tel: 603-868-5571
Fax: 603-868-1858
www.ci.durham.nh.us

May 17, 2022

Pease Development Authority
Board of Directors, Paul Brean – Executive Director
55 International Drive
Portsmouth, NH 03801

**Re: Impact of Potential Air Cargo or Other Incompatible Uses at Pease
Development Authority**

Dear Mr. Brean and Members of the Pease Development Authority,

The Durham Town Council understands that your planning process is in transition and would like to go on record with the following statement.

Recent discussions about a possible air cargo facility at Portsmouth International Airport at Pease (PSM) have raised community apprehension and concern about, among many issues, the impact on resident health and well-being from increased large aircraft operations and noise, particularly at night. Please note that aircraft pass over parts of Durham at less than 1,000' above ground level (AGL) on their approach to PSM, and departing aircraft can be as low as 3,000' AGL. Other concerns expressed are regional, and include negative impacts on the overall environment, the Great Bay Estuary, citizen and wildlife health, and on our regional infrastructure, potentially leading to a notable degradation in the quality of life throughout the Seacoast Region.

The Town Council members have diverse backgrounds that include physics, engineering, aviation, business, real estate, education, and the environment. Although the Council understands that discussions regarding an air cargo facility are preliminary, it wants to go on record noting its serious concerns that any development leading to a significant increase in large aircraft traffic, particularly at night, will likely have a negative impact on our community and the region. The Council believes these issues require, at the very least, additional study before moving forward with consideration of this project or any other large project at PSM.

The Council has come to this conclusion after reviewing FAA and Industry data and information that included the approaches and departures to PSM, the PSM 2014 and 2018 noise exposure maps, standard operating procedures of large aircraft like the Boeing 767, stage 4 aircraft noise limits, studies on the health impacts of air traffic noise, and the environmental impact of large air cargo operations.

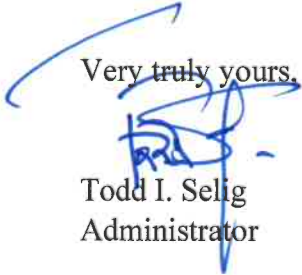
Further, we understand that once an air cargo facility is established, it is extremely difficult to control the level and size of its future operations, given FAA rules. Since the PDA has noted that “there is massive demand” for air cargo, we are deeply concerned about what could evolve, if any of these facilities were to be established.

As noted in the April 11, 2022 letter to the PDA from the Rye Select Board, the PDA is required by statute to “act in a manner which is consistent with the public good,” and to consider not only revenues and benefits to the state, but also the “Environment, and the quality of life of the affected communities, [and] the Seacoast Region.” RSA 12-G:7, II; RSA 12-G:1, II. The Durham Town Council concurs, and believes the PDA must engage qualified outside consultants and engineering firms to study, evaluate, and document the health and environmental impacts of this or any other proposal that would result in current and/or potential future increased large aircraft cargo operations. The PDA should then carefully consider how this would impact the environment and quality of life in our region.

The Town Council passed a resolution in 2013 “Supporting the basing of the new U.S. Air Force tanker KC-46A at Pease Air National Guard Base”, and we continue to support the military flights that help defend our nation. However, the Town Council does have significant concerns about increased large commercial aircraft operations at Portsmouth International Airport, particularly at night.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the Pease Development Authority and the entire Seacoast Region.

Very truly yours,



Todd I. Selig
Administrator

c: Town Council