



AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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November 30, 2005

Mr. Joseph A. Griffo
Oneida County Executive
Oneida County Office Building
800 Park Avenue
Utica, New York 13501

Dear Mr. Griffo:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of more than 406,000 members, over two-thirds of the nation's pilots, including nearly 15,000 in New York state. On behalf of our membership, AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a national transportation system.

AOPA is aware of the planned decommissioning of the Oneida County Airport (UCA) and subsequent transfer of operations to the former Griffiss Air Force Base, now known as Griffiss Airpark (RME) on or about December 31, 2006. While we are concerned about the potential impact of this relocation on our members currently based at UCA, we also understand that the acquisition of Griffiss by the county could provide a significant opportunity to improve the aviation infrastructure and economic development in the county.

Under Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, all existing airport users and tenants must be fairly and reasonably accommodated during this relocation process and we would urge you to actively involve and consult with these airport customers during the transition process. The existing airport serves general aviation users well, and as the existing users are more or less being forced to relocate, these same users should not be subject to significant and dramatic rate and fee increases at the new airport facility.

We also understand the county is exploring a number of options for the possible disposal of the UCA property after the transition, and that this transition of operations from UCA to RME will have a number of costs associated with the move. Clearly, we would also urge the county to seek the largest return possible from the sale of UCA property in order to fund the move to RMW. Our members have told us that there is potential interest from both the public and private sectors in keeping UCA open and operating as an airport. AOPA asks that Oneida County fairly consider all reasonable proposals, including the potential sale of UCA as an airport.

Thank you for your consideration of AOPA's views on this issue. If we can be of any further assistance during this transition please contact me at 301-695-2200.

Sincerely,

Bill Dunn
Vice President
Airports