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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 3, 1992
FOR MORE INFORMATION: Rod Blackstone (202) 225-2711 (Wise)
or Kent Keyser (202) 225-3452 (Rahall)
or Ron Hudok (202) 225-4172 (Mollohan)

WISE, RAHALL, MOLLOHAN DISCUSS REGIONAL AIRPORT WITH FAA OFFICIALS

(Washington, D.C.) -- A new regional airport to serve the Charleston-Huntington-Parkersburg area continues to move closer to becoming a reality, according to U.S. Reps. Bob Wise, Nick Rahall and Alan Mollohan (all D-W.Va.) who met with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) officials this afternoon.

The FAA's Director of Airport Planning, Paul Galis, met with the three Members of Congress to provide an update on the project, which he said is "progressing satisfactorily."

"I am very encouraged by the progress being made to make this happen," said Wise, who resurrected the dormant push for a regional airport three years ago. "The FAA is planning a meeting on June 11th with representatives of the three airports which currently serve the area to discuss the scope of work for the next phase of the study and the process to select a consultant."

"The FAA will be exploring the viability of a number of potential sites within the Huntington-Parkersburg-Charleston triangle for the regional air facility," explained Rahall, who has also led the push for the project. "The site selection process should take between six and 12 months to complete."

Mollohan stressed the importance of the regional airport concept. "The three airports which currently serve the Parkersburg-Charleston-Huntington triangle do an adequate job serving their own areas, but we can do more and with a new larger regional air facility, we can do a lot more to serve the flying needs of the region and create new jobs."

The three congressmen stressed that no site has been selected yet and, contrary to some reports, no site has been endorsed or should be considered a favorite, adding that the site selection process "will include substantial public participation before any final decision is made."

In March the FAA determined that building a new regional air facility would be economically feasible, so the process should proceed.

BOB WISE
3RD DISTRICT, WEST VIRGINIA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4803

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1421 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20516 4803
(202) 725-7711
DISTRICT OFFICE:
107 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
CHARLESTON, WV 25302
(304) 342-7170

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Dear TRAN.REGIONAL.AIRPORT5:

I want to let you know of the recent progress made in developing a regional air facility for the Charleston-Huntington-Parkersburg area. As you know, the first phase of the feasibility study for this facility concluded positively, and we are now ready to move on to the next phase. A meeting I had recently with a top official from the Federal Aviation Administration also encourages me that this project is moving along very well.

On April 9th the West Virginia Department of Transportation put the regional air facility on the state's "master plan." Shortly thereafter the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved this action, which now makes the project eligible for the FAA to fund the next phases of the feasibility study.

The next step in this process is to study possible sites for the regional air facility. This study would evaluate the economic and environmental feasibility of possible sites, taking into account the topography of various sites, the potential for commercial activity near those sites and the projected operational costs of the facility. The cost of this phase of the study has not yet been determined, but it could amount to more than \$500,000. This siting study would take six months or more to complete.

Just a few days ago I met in Washington with Paul Galis, FAA's Director of Airport Planning. We discussed the progress made thus far with this project and the next phase in the process. Mr. Galis said the FAA generally supports the concept of regional airports and he was also impressed with the satisfactory progress of this particular project. We pledged to continue working together to ensure that the process keeps moving ahead.

Last week the FAA met with the managers of the Yeager, Tri-State and Wood County airports to discuss the scope of work of the siting phase of the feasibility study and the process for selecting a consultant to conduct the study. From this meeting the FAA should now have a better idea of the cost of the study.

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The West Virginia Department of Transportation will apply to the FAA to fund 90 percent of the study, and the state will provide the remainder of the funds.

I just wanted to share this good news with you about the regional air facility and the progress made thus far. I appreciate your interest in this important project and I will stay in touch with you as new developments unfold.

Very truly yours,

Bob Wise
U.S. Representative

BW:reg