



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John A. DeFrancisco

## Senate Passes Airport Authority Bill

JOHN A. DEFRANCISCO May 25, 2011

| ISSUE: **CITIES**

Senator John A. DeFrancisco (R-I-C, Syracuse) announced that his bill (S3250A), which would create a Syracuse Regional Airport Authority, passed the New York State Senate today.

“By creating this new entity, the airport could function more like a business and find ways to operate more efficiently,” said Senator DeFrancisco. “The savings realized from a more efficiently run operation could be passed on to the consumer in the form of lower air fares.”

The bill calls for the Airport Authority to provide safe and efficient air transportation by enhancing the airport capacity and improving and expanding aviation and related facilities.

“With more flexibility, it could make it easier to bring additional carriers into the region, which could help lower costs and expand service to other cities,” said Senator DeFrancisco. “Additionally, it could increase the number of flights coming into and out of Syracuse to give consumers more options,” said Senator DeFrancisco.

The bill establishes the powers and duties of the Authority and grants it the power to issue up to \$200 million in bonds, and it provides that the State, Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse would not be liable for the Authority bonds.

An example of an Airport Authority that has benefitted a community is the Albany County Airport Authority, which was formed in 1996. By 1998, a terminal was added and another rebuilt. With the improvements to the airport, the Authority was able to attract Southwest Airlines, one of the leading low-cost airlines in the United States.

The 11-member Syracuse Regional Airport Authority would be appointed, and would include seven appointments by the Syracuse Mayor, one appointment by the Onondaga County Executive, one appointment by the DeWitt Town Board, one appointment by the East Syracuse Minoa School District, and one appointment for a period of one year alternating between the North Syracuse Central School District Board of Education and the Clay, Cicero and Salina Town Boards.

“The Authority Could make decisions that will benefit the whole region, not just one municipality, which could help to stimulate Central New York’s economy,” concluded Senator DeFrancisco.

The bill has been sent to the Assembly and is awaiting approval by that body.