

EDWARD J. MARKEY
MASSACHUSETTS

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United States Senate

SUITE SD-255
DIRKSEN BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2107
202-224-2742

975 JFK FEDERAL BUILDING
15 NEW SUDBURY STREET
BOSTON, MA 02203
617-565-8519

222 MILLIKEN BOULEVARD, SUITE 312
FALL RIVER, MA 02721
508-677-0523

1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103
413-785-4610

December 19, 2019

Administrator Stephen Dickson
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Dickson:

I write to request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) include Boston's Logan International Airport as a test site in its Airspace Hazard Mitigation Program. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 authorized this pilot program at five airports, "in order test and evaluate technologies or systems that detect and mitigate potential aviation safety risks posed by unmanned aircraft," also known as drones. I firmly believe that Logan Airport should be selected as one of the FAA's five test sites for deploying counter-drone technology due to its history as a pioneer in aviation security and its unique regional status.

Logan Airport and its operator, the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), have earned a reputation for being a leader and committed partner in improving aviation safety standards. Following the events of September 11, 2001, Massport was the first airport authority to equip State Police Troopers with handheld computers. Logan has also continuously been the airport of choice to test and implement new technologies, including foreign object debris detection systems, automatic dependent surveillance broadcast vehicle transponders, and runway status lights.

Massport additionally has experience participating in federal pilot programs for aviation security. In 2007, Massport partnered with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to determine the feasibility of adopting 100% airport employee screening at airports nationwide. This pilot program saw Massport work with the TSA to evaluate the procedures, equipment, and resources necessary to implement such an extensive program. Because of this program's success and Massport's other security initiatives, the TSA actually named Logan as its Airport of the Year in 2018.

In the same year, Massport reported a record breaking 40.9 million passengers traveling through Logan Airport. Destinations for these travelers include more than 130 domestic and international destinations with nonstop service provided by more than 40 airlines. Due to this growth and Logan's status as New England's main airport, it is increasingly at risk from both malicious and negligent drone operators. Massport's participation in the FAA's Airspace Hazard Mitigation Program would allow it to start addressing these significant threats.

Massport's selection would also have the unique benefit of facilitating participation by many of our nation's leading academic and research institutions that are based in and around Boston. The region surrounding Logan is home to many of the greatest minds in the United States, and Massport has a long record of working with local universities and industries on testing and implementing new technologies.

Through all of its successes, Massport has demonstrated how proactive leadership, collaboration, and innovative practices can enhance security standards and better position our airports to address the threats of the future. Given its pioneering history and unique attributes, I believe that the FAA should include Logan Airport as a pilot participant in testing counter-drone technologies through the Airspace Hazard Mitigation Program.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Eric Kashdan in my office at (202) 224-2742.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable David P. Pekoske, Administrator, Transportation Security Administration