PRESS RELEASE

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NATIONAL CITIZEN AVIATION ORGANIZATION STRONGLY OPPOSES THE O'HARE EXPANSION BILL.

US CAW is the national organization of over a dozen citizen groups and coalitions representing over hundred thousand citizens around the major airports in the USA. They are united in their fight for a sustainable, equitable and accountable aviation industry at home and abroad. US CAW is affiliated with the London-based Aviation Environmental Foundation's International Coalition for Sustainable Aviation, which has consultative status with International Civil Aviation Organization, the UN body that seems to be dominated by US aviation industry and the FAA. (www.aef.org.uk)

Generally US CAW does not engage in conflicts of local airport expansion, though our position is one of no quantitative growth-see our web site on the petition drive for an airport expansion moratorium--and of emphasis on inter-modal transportation with reduced air transportation and increased high speed rail transportation.

However, the local conflict on reconfiguring, expanding O'Hare and building a new airport at Peotone is unfortunately not a local one anymore. It is made national in the proposed Senate and House Bill entitled "National Aviation Capacity Expansion Act" (S2039-Durbin bill; H3479-Lipinski bill). At the Senate Commerce Committee hearing Senator Rockefeller said Governor Ryan and Mayor Daley "came together in the interest of not only Chicago and Illinois but the entire nation." Sen. McCain said this is an important piece of legislation and that "this plan may have some problems in it, but I believe we should move forward with it." Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-Texas) said, "When a governor and mayor come together, I think we should support the basic concept." Sen. Hutchison also said that when the bill does go to the Senate floor, she will offer her bill (S. 633), which would make it possible for other airport expansion projects to undergo an expedited review process, as an amendment.

US CAW supports the opposition by Illinois US Senator Fitzgerald, the president of the Illinois Senate, our local member organization AreCO (Jack Saporito at 847-506-0670 and at www.areco.org) and by other surrounding communities. Our opposition is mainly based upon the vitiation of the political process and the usurpation of local aviation decision-making by federal authorities, which according to Illinois law professor Ronald Rotunda in this case violates Illinois aviation law. There are also secondary reasons of safety and of noise, water and air pollution that prompt us to strongly oppose both the Senate and House bills which probably will be voted on after the Memorial Day recess on June 2.