



CITY OF NEW HAVEN

JUSTIN ELICKER, MAYOR

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September 16, 2026

Robert Reed, Chair
Tweed New Haven Airport Board of Directors
c/o Tom Rafter, Executive Director
155 Burr Street
New Haven, CT 06512

**RE: Tweed Operations and Management Protocol-
Notice of Public Act 26-14 and Upcoming Changes to State Law**

Dear Chair Reed,

I write regarding recent incidents where U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detained individuals traveling through Tweed-New Haven Airport. These detentions by ICE are deeply concerning, particularly because, based on public reports, these individuals appear to have no criminal history.

It is the responsibility of the City of New Haven and Tweed-New Haven Airport (the "Airport") to ensure, within the law, that community members enjoy safe transit through Airport spaces. While it is fully agreed and acknowledged that the Tweed-New Haven Airport Authority (the "Authority") and the Airport Operator (Avports) must follow federal law, it is also important that the Authority and Avports not exceed any federal requirements by extending additional assistance to ICE.

We are also aware that some people attempting to demonstrate and observe within the boundary of the Airport were told by an employee of Avports that they were trespassing and that the employee requested New Haven Police to remove individuals from the Airport. It is important that the Authority facilitate the ability for individuals to demonstrate and observe federal law enforcement in a legal way that does not disrupt Airport activities. New Haven

Police have updated its Standard Operating Procedures (the “Amended SOP”) regarding demonstrations at the Airport so as to facilitate individuals’ ability to express themselves and minimize any potential unnecessary conflict with officers of the New Haven Police Department.

Finally, we write to remind you that Public Act 26-14 was enacted by the Connecticut General Assembly during the 2026 legislative session and signed into law by Governor Ned Lamont on May 4, 2026 (the “Public Act”). Section 7 of the Public Act will take effect on October 1, 2026. Given that Tweed New Haven Airport is classified as a “municipal” facility”, the Airport is subject to the Public Act. I attach a copy herein for reference and distribution to Authority staff and Avports. The Public Act states that no peace officer, as defined in section 51-277a of the general statutes and amended by the Public Act, shall detain, arrest or otherwise take an individual in a protected area, state facility or municipal facility into custody on the basis of a civil offense, unless (1) such peace officer is acting in the peace officer's official capacity, and (2) the individual to be detained, arrested or otherwise taken into custody is the subject of a judicial warrant.

Given the above, I write to request the Airport Authority implement the following:

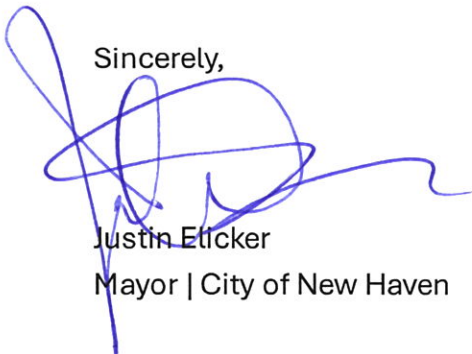
- Review all recent Airport interactions with ICE to ensure that the Airport only provides access that it is required to by law. Otherwise, do not provide any additional supports such as, but not limited to, designated or curbside parking, access to Air Operations Area (AEO) or private access areas such as catering, offices for management / Authority and retail leaseholds.
- We understand that Avports is providing ICE with parking accommodations. We also understand this is not required under federal law. We are requesting that the Authority require Avports to discontinue providing any preferential parking to ICE that is not otherwise provided to the general public.
- Update the Airport Demonstration Policy to facilitate demonstrations of non-commercial speech and observation on airport property in consideration of the Public Act by providing accommodation within the arrivals and departures areas and immediately exterior to these locations on the sidewalk and clearly designate these areas as free speech zones. We understand that limitations exist on Airport property and that demonstrators and observers should not obstruct airport operations. Yet, at the same time, the Airport has a responsibility to facilitate demonstrators and observers having access to airport property to ensure transparency. New Haven Police support should only be requested by Avports in the event that there is a risk to public safety.

- Train and instruct Avports operations staff to accommodate such non-commercial speech on Airport premises based on an updated Demonstration Policy as well as which speech would be protected under the First Amendment of the Constitution, provided that it does not result in interference with the constitutional rights of others and does not interfere with the operations and functioning of the Airport, in a manner consistent with Operating Rules and Regulations and involving the New Haven Police Department in a manner consistent with the Amended SOP.
- Provide immediate notification to the City of New Haven when the Authority or Avports becomes aware of an attempted enforcement action or detention by ICE has occurred.
- If ICE detains an individual on Airport property and the Authority or Avports become aware that such a detention was conducted without a judicial warrant, which is a violation of the Trust Act, immediately notify the City of New Haven and fully cooperate with any investigation that the City of New Haven may implement.
- Provide a copy of the Public Act and related Airport policy to all peace officers, as defined in the Public Act, who make an application for Tweed-New Haven Airport-approved identification media (badges) or other security privileges.
- Post signage in both the Arrivals and Departures section as well as on the Airport's website notifying community members of their rights based on the Public Act.

To ensure the implementation of the above items, I expect the Authority to provide clear direction to Avports, acting in its capacities as sub-lessee, operator of the Airport and Airport Manager.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter as we look to support the safety of all of our residents, the officers of the New Haven Police Department and a lawful implementation of the Public Act while complying with federal law.

Sincerely,



Justin Etlicker
Mayor | City of New Haven

Attachments,

1. PA 26-14, An Act Concerning Democracy and Government Accountability and the Use and Retention of Data Derived from Automated License Plate Reader Systems, see [AN ACT CONCERNING DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE USE AND RETENTION OF DATA DERIVED FROM AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER SYSTEMS.](#)

cc: Evelise Ribeiro, Chair, Board of Police Commissioners
Justin McCarthy, Chief Administrative Officer, City of New Haven
David Zannelli, Chief, New Haven Police Department