June 11, 2019

Ohio Senate Finance Committee
The Ohio Statehouse
1 Capital Square
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: Written Testimony in Support of the Ohio Aviation Association's amendments to H.B. 166

Dear Members of the Ohio Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing in support of the three amendments the Ohio Aviation Association has placed before your Committee: 1) an increase in funding to the Ohio Airport Grant Program from $5.9 to $16 Million, 2) the creation of an Air Service Development Grant Fund in the amount of $15 million, and, lastly, 3) the creation of an Aviation Student Loan Program.

Each of the amendments advances the aviation infrastructure and economic development of the State of Ohio and should be supported, but I wish to share how the Ohio Airport Grant Program has benefitted the Warren County Airport, Lebanon, OH.

We have received ODOT grants in 2015 and 2016.  They were for runway repair, a new beacon to help pilots find the airport at night, and new mounting pads for our runway end indicator lights.  These helped make the airport safer and easier to see at night.  The grants we received helped make the airport safer for all users, both those that are tenants and those that are transients.

While these were great improvements, we still need additional improvements. We requested ODOT grants in 2017 and 2018 for obstruction removal and taxiway repair.  These needs were not selected because of the limited funds available to ODOT. Had additional funds been available to ODOT for the Airport Grant Program, additional projects like ours would be approved and contribute to the Ohio system of airports. Our airport, like others, contribute to the economic vitality of the entire State.

Thank you for your consideration of these important amendments.

Sincerely,

Alan Wolfson, Airport Manager
Secretary-Treasurer Warren County Airport Authority