

April 2, 2008

Dear Fencepost Editor:

AReCO was surprised to read that the Daily Herald editorial board was calling on Washington to fix the airline mess (*Congress must fix this airline mess, 3/28/08*), concerned that the FAA was basically on-the-take for the industry.

What was most surprising is that AReCO, for about 20 years now, has been supplying the Daily Herald editorial board and reporters evidence that this is standard operating procedure. The FAA, as well as the UN's counterpoint ICAO, was actually formed to promote aviation. That mandate held until AReCO was able to help convince the Clinton Administration that an agency that mandated safety and promotion was at best unsafe. While the mandate has changed to just safety, the nature of the beast still remains.

The editorial claimed, "...we've all recognized since at least Sept. 11, 2001 that our airline industry is critical to our lives, our economy and our infrastructure." While that may be true to some extent, the only reason it is, is because the media, including the Daily Herald, promoted "just more of the same" when it backed O'Hare expansion. They bought into the downtown controlled Chicago Chamber of Commerce glossy marketing scheme.

O'Hare expansion was the kingpin to the FAA's plan which, the General Accountability Office has stated that thousands of U.S. airport expansions are required to handle the artificial 4-Phased growth of flights. That historically massive increase, including now the 2008 economic globalization treaties (Open Skies), will kill any chance of viable transportation competition, a reduction of the problems and a real choice for travelers.

A national world-class high-speed rail system would reduce flights (regional) by more than 50%, thus delays and other related problems and force true competition and change into the air transport industry.

The media and the American traveling public are unfortunately ignorant, resulting from industry's control of much of the news, for not demanding a more reliable, sustainable, weather impervious and thus, competitive mode to unreliable air travel (for regional and sometimes national travel), like many sophisticated countries have.

According to independent U.S. government reports and common logic, we need a World-class high-speed rail system, not more expansion of unreliable air trans.

The Daily Herald deserves what it promoted and fought for behind the scenes, O'Hare expansion; just more of the same, only much worse, because of the behemoth flight expansion it allows. (The O'Hare expansion plan will allow between 2.4-2.8 million annual flights with today's delays; more than twice the flights we have today.) And the Herald's trumpeting of true "western access" benefit *raison d'état* will, as AReCO has repeatedly warned, doubtfully ever happen.

Competition, reliability, security, no dependence on foreign oil (maglev) and a back-up system are what high-speed rail would bring, at about 1/3 the cost of airport expansions, bringing over 400,000 jobs to northern Illinois. That is what we really need, so that when there is another catastrophe we are not brought to our knees.

Soon, the Alliance of Residents Concerning O'Hare (AReCO) will be sending the media more evidence implicating the FAA is hiding favorable reports that would eliminate the need for O'Hare expansion; also, we will be sending them a vetted Solutions white paper, lets now see how the Daily Herald handles the information.

Wake up! Or just let the air transportation industry keep running over you and robbing your tax dollars!

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