



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2013

CONTACT: Stefan Friedman
(646) 241-7786

GLOBAL GATEWAY ALLIANCE URGES CONGRESS TO AVOID “DEBILITATING IMPACT” ON AIRPORTS AND AIR TRAVEL FROM GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN, CONTINUED SEQUESTRATION
Vital Runway and Terminal Construction Projects at Risk, New Round of Air Traffic Control Furloughs and Reductions in CBP Spending Worsen Delays, No New Passports Means Millions in Costs to Airlines

Citing substantial economic loss to airlines, threats to aviation safety and worsening delays, and risks to vital long term projects, the Global Gateway Alliance (GGA), the leading coalition for NYC metropolitan airport improvements, today demanded that Congress reach a federal budget agreement that avoids a government shutdown and further cuts to federal spending.

With the nation facing an imminent October 1 deadline for a shutdown and next round of sequestration, “essential” services such as TSA agents, Customs and Border Patrol officers, and Air Traffic Controllers will remain, enabling airports to continue to operate. However, continuing operations alone will not mitigate the impact of a government at a standstill on passengers, airlines and long term capacity.

GGA spelled out just some of the worst impacts on NYC area airports, including:

- **No New Passports or Visas:** In the 1995-96 government shutdowns, 200,000 passports went unprocessed, costing airlines millions in lost revenue.
- **Air Traffic Control Furloughs:** The next round of sequester does not include a plan for shifting construction resources to keeping Controllers from being furloughed. Instead, furloughs like those the nation saw in April could re-occur. The New York City airspace is already the most delayed in the country. Furloughing Controllers would mean worsening those delays further.
- **Worsening Extreme Customs Wait Times:** JFK airport has the worst CBP wait times in the country, topping out at 3 and 4 hours within the last year. Continued cuts to overtime and hiring from a shutdown and sequestration would mean zero relief from a situation that Senator Schumer has called “a national embarrassment.”
- **Delaying Essential Airport Construction Projects:** A shutdown would mean putting on hold essential construction projects that rely on new federal approvals and reviews. At NYC airports, that means delays in critical construction projects -- and the jobs they bring -- like recently announced runway safety and capacity additions at JFK, LaGuardia, Newark and Stewart, and potentially impacting the redevelopment of LaGuardia’s Central Terminal Building.
- **NextGen Air Traffic Control Technology Delays:** Former FAA Administrator Marion Blakely recently warned that the \$1 billion a year needed for NextGen is at risk from sequester, because it forces the FAA to

move Research and Development monies to fund ongoing operations. As a result, finally replacing decades old radar technology with a “GPS for the skies” will be further delayed.

“The Federal government has shortchanged NYC area airports on our fair share of dollars and resources for years, despite our importance to the rest of the nation’s air travel,” said Joseph Sitt, GGA Chairman. “Now, they are going down an even more irresponsible path toward shutdown and further cuts that would have a debilitating impact.”

“A government shutdown and further sequestration would cement existing delays and bottlenecks in our region’s airports,” said **Kathryn Wylde**, President & CEO of the Partnership for New York City. “The Federal government should be investing in making the key gateways to our country efficient and impressive points of entry rather than allow them to continue to constrict our economic growth.”

“To hold workers and businesses, who are struggling through a limping recovery, hostage Congress has shown bad faith in their governing responsibilities,” **Stuart Appelbaum**, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. “A failing government affects our economy through thousands of local linkages, of which our local airports are of utmost concern to us on the Alliance. We need to be unanimous in declaring such a lack of governance unacceptable.”

GGA Executive Director **Stephen Sigmund** added, “The short term consequences of a shutdown and furloughs are bad enough, but unfortunately the biggest impact would come in the future. We are already years behind in bringing the satellite air traffic technology and big capacity projects our airports need to handle the 130 million passengers expected over the next 20 years, we can’t afford even more delays.”

GGA also announced a Twitter campaign to catalog the public’s complaints and concerns during the shutdown. The organization asked followers and other Twitter users to add the following hashtag to any and all tweets on airline-related problems caused by the shutdown #WhyMoreDelays.

For more information on the GGA, please contact Stefan Friedman, sfriedman@mercuryllc.com or [\(646\) 241-7786](tel:6462417786).

#

ABOUT GGA

Global Gateway Alliance (GGA), was established to address the major challenges facing the metropolitan region’s airports and related infrastructure that, if left unaddressed, will serve as a major impediment to the long-term growth of New York City and surrounding areas. By harnessing the expertise of leaders in business, government, academia, labor and other sectors, we seek to tackle these challenges head-on and serve as the leading advocate in an effort to improve our airports and facilitate the continued growth of the region. For more information regarding the Global Gateway Alliance, please visit the website at www.globalgatewayalliance.org, or email info@globalgatewayalliance.org. Follow GGA on Twitter @GGA_NYNJ and ‘Like’ the organization on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/UsqxGw>.

GGA’s board of directors includes: **Joe Sitt** (Chairman), CEO, Thor Equities, **Kathryn Wylde**, President of the Partnership for New York City; **Joseph Spinnato**, President of the Hotel Association of New York City; **William Rudin**, CEO of Rudin Management Company, Inc. and Chairman of ABNY; **Stuart Appelbaum**, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; **Dan Glickman** former Congressman and U.S. Agriculture Secretary; **Jared Kushner**, Owner of Kushner Properties and the New York Observer; **Alvin S. Trenk**, Chairman and CEO of Air Pegasus Corp; **Mitchell Moss**, Henry Hart Rice Professor of Urban Policy and Planning at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University; **Peter Ward**, President of the Hotel Trades Council on New York, and **David Hopkins**, Senior Director of Aviation at the New York City Economic Development Corporation.