



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 15, 2014

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GGA UNVEILS POLICY ROADMAP CALLING ON MAYOR DE BLASIO TO MAKE INVESTING IN THE REGION'S AIRPORTS A TOP PRIORITY

Roadmap calls for one-seat transportation to airports, NextGen in New York City

(New York/New Jersey): Spurred by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's call for a renewed focus on modernizing New York City's airports, Global Gateway Alliance today released a new policy roadmap guiding Mayor Bill de Blasio toward making the region's airports a key priority.

While Mayor de Blasio does not have direct control over airport operations, he has a substantial bully pulpit on any public policy issues in the City, and New York City leases the land for JFK and LaGuardia Airports to the Port Authority. GGA said the roadmap would help the Mayor and his Administration have a real and lasting impact on improving New York City's airports, which are the first and last impression on business and leisure travelers alike.

Specifically, GGA's roadmap calls for the de Blasio Administration to lobby for NextGen 21st Century air traffic technology to be rolled out in the New York airspace before other parts of the nation, new City initiatives to improve transportation to and from airports, and changes to policies that have restricted the growth of air cargo traffic at JFK.

GGA's policy roadmap comes after investments into the modernization and improvement of New York area airports have been put on the back burner for decades. The impact of reduced investment is clear: LaGuardia has been ranked the worst airport in the United States while Newark and JFK are not far behind, according to several recent passenger surveys.

"Modernizing and expanding our airports is an all-hands-on-deck moment for our city, our state, and our region. Governor Cuomo has made it clear he will lead these investments, and now we need Mayor de Blasio and his Administration to step forward as well. This roadmap will help the Mayor's team do just that – and bring our airports into the 21st century in the process. GGA stands ready to be a partner in that effort," said **GGA Chairman and Founder Joe Sitt**.

"Governor Cuomo has put modernizing and expanding the airports front and center for the city and state. The region's airports are economic engines that are critical to creating good jobs with good wages in New York City," said **Stuart Appelbaum, GGA Board Member and President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union**. People who want to fight poverty and low wages should advocate for the policies in this position paper to ensure the airports fulfill their critical role as good job creators."

“This smart plan lays out a path to more jobs and a stronger middle class,” said **George Miranda, GGA Board Member and Teamsters’ International Vice President**. “For example, currently, 53-foot trailers are not legally allowed on the Van Wyck Expressway, the major roadway servicing John F. Kennedy International Airport, where hundreds of billions of dollars in air cargo pass through each year. Eliminating this restriction will increase trucking capacity to the airport by 20 percent. That’s an environmentally sound policy that also reduces operating costs for businesses to help create jobs and it means increased safety on local roads.”

“New York’s regional airports have been a bottleneck to economic growth for far too long,” said **Kathryn Wylde, GGA Board Member and President and CEO of the Partnership for New York City**. “Planned improvements to LaGuardia and JFK by the State are a great first step towards upgrading our airports to current cargo and passenger needs, but much more is needed. With Mayor de Blasio as a vocal advocate for the recommendations outlined in GGA’s policy roadmap, New York City can accelerate both job creation and private investment.”

“Despite their economic importance, our region’s airports have been pushed to the proverbial ‘back of the plane’ in favor of other transportation priorities for too long. By advocating for these policies, Mayor de Blasio and his team would ensure that our world-class airports reflect the world-class city and people they serve,” added **GGA Executive Director Stephen Sigmund**.

Airport Priorities for the De Blasio Administration

1. *Lobby for NextGen Air Traffic Technology*

Given our impact on nationwide air traffic, the FAA and Federal government need to make New York City the top priority for rolling out the new NextGen air traffic technology. NextGen is a series of programs that amount to GPS for the sky – meaning air traffic controllers no longer have to rely on 1960’s era ground-based radar technology. As a result of modernizing the technology, the entire air traffic control system would be more efficient and more effective – delivering people and goods to their destinations faster and more affordably. In fact, if Congress fails to act, by 2030, we could lose as many as 125,000 jobs, \$6 billion in wages, and \$16 billion in business sales each year because of excessive delays and congestion (RPA).

Mayor de Blasio and his economic development team should advocate for New York’s airports to be first in the nation for a full and rapid implementation of NextGen.

2. *Expand Air Cargo Access*

The growth of the region’s air cargo industry is currently restricted due to the inability of trucks - and therefore goods - to move easily around the region. In fact, access to major roadway arteries is limited due to height and length restrictions. The current industry standard cargo trucks (53 feet) are banned from the Van Wyck Expressway, creating a major jam in access to air cargo.

In order to increase our national competitiveness in the air cargo industry, the de Blasio Administration should allow 53 foot trucks on the Van Wyck and further develop Air Cargo strategies in conjunction with the industry.

3. *Advocate for Free, Public WiFi at Airports*

The New York City area airports continue to lag behind nationally and internationally on passenger comforts offered. For example, in 1999, the Port Authority entered into an exclusive deal with Boingo to offer WiFi at

its airports for a fee. More than a decade later, however, Boingo continues to charge a fee for WiFi while the City offers free Internet access in parks, train stations, and even entire neighborhoods.

Boingo should be pushed to offer free WiFi for the 110 million annual New York City airport passengers. Free WiFi is a common amenity throughout the country and the globe, and should be at our airports.

Mayor de Blasio supported the recently-passed City Council Resolution calling for free WiFi at New York City area airports and should continue to encourage the Port Authority and Boingo to amend their contract.

4. Increase Transportation Options to Airports

For residents and tourists alike, reliable and cost effective transportation to our airports is a major priority – and currently, a significant problem. There is no one-seat ride to any of the area airports. While the area currently has two-seat ride options to JFK and Newark, LaGuardia has very few, if any, viable mass transportation options. In addition, taxi wait times at area airports are often extremely long. All the while, traffic congestion to and from airport piles up due to lack of access and cars circling waiting to pick up passengers.

The de Blasio Administration must focus resources on expanding transportation to New York City airports, including developing one-seat ride options, express buses to LaGuardia, better taxi availability at peak travel times and expanded auto options like HOV lanes and cell phone waiting lots on or near airports.

5. Overhaul the Customs Experience

JFK, the busiest international arrivals airport in the country, has the worst customs wait times in the country. With arriving passengers often having to wait two hours or more, the Federal government needs to implement a comprehensive customs solution at JFK, not only for our quality of life, but also to increase the economic competitiveness of the region and prevent lasting damage to the New York brand.

The Mayor and his Administration should lobby the Federal Government for more staffing and better technology at JFK to ease Customs wait times and improve the experience for tens of millions tourists and business travelers alike.

6. Modernize and Expand Terminals and Runways

If our airports are not modernized, New York and New Jersey could suffer up to \$79 billion in losses, including over \$16 billion in lost revenue and \$5.5 billion in lost labor income by 2025 (Partnership for NYC). Modernizing outdated terminals like LaGuardia's Central Terminal Building, coupled with the demolition of outdated structures, roadway and taxiway reconfigurations, and runway expansion will lead to airports that are efficient and something in which the City can take pride.

The incoming de Blasio Administration should work with the Cuomo Administration, the Port Authority and airlines to keep the focus on modernized airports that set the pace for the nation.

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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 www.globalgatewayalliance.org. Follow GGA on Twitter @GGA_NYNY and 'Like' the organization on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/UsqxGw>.

GGA's board of directors includes: **Joe Sitt** (Chairman), CEO, Thor Equities; **Stuart Appelbaum**, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; **Chris Giamo**, Regional President for TD Bank; **Dan Glickman** former Congressman and U.S. Agriculture Secretary; **David Hopkins**, Senior Director of Aviation at the New York City Economic Development Corporation; **Jared Kushner**, Owner of Kushner Properties and the New York Observer; **George Miranda**, Teamsters' International Vice President; **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; **William Rudin**, CEO of Rudin Management Company, Inc. and Chairman of ABNY; **Joseph Spinnato**, President of the Hotel Association of New York City; **Alvin S. Trenk**, Chairman and CEO of Air Pegasus Corp; **Peter Ward**, President of the Hotel Trades Council on New York; **Kathryn Wylde**, President of the Partnership for New York City, and **Tim Zagat**, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of Zagat Survey.