



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JUST SAY NO TO CELL PHONE CALLS IN-FLIGHT

New York-New Jersey Area Residents Overwhelmingly Oppose Allowing Cell Phone Calls During Airplane Flights, Say New Air Traffic Technology Should be Number One Aviation Priority for NYC

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY – With the public comment period for allowing cell phone calls on planes ending Friday, an online survey conducted by the Global Gateway Alliance (GGA) found residents in the NY/NJ/PA metropolitan area think allowing cell phone calls in-flight is a bad idea. More than 66% of those surveyed say the Federal Government should not allow passengers to make calls during flights, while just 34% disagree. In fact, when asked to describe their feelings towards cell phone use in-flight, the most commonly used word was “annoying”, followed closely by “no”.

When asked to choose their top priority for Federal Government spending on New York area airports, new air traffic control technology called “NextGen” surpassed its next closest competitor by more than 2-1.

“The people have spoken loud and clear that cell phone calls have no place on flights. The Federal Government should pay close attention to these findings as they consider whether to lift its long-time ban,” said Joseph Sitt, GGA’s Founder and Chairman. “At the same time, our airspace is the most delayed in the country, and our residents know it. They want the Federal government to spend its money and time on helping relieve congestion with NextGen, rather than creating more headaches in the skies.”

The survey is the first to assess attitudes of residents in the nation’s most crowded airspace towards cell phone calls in-flight as well as Federal Government spending priorities.

CELL PHONES ON PLANES

In December, the FCC voted to consider lifting its ban on in-flight cell phone use. The FCC’s public comment period ended on February 14. The comments will be reviewed by the wireless telecommunications bureau staff who will then make a recommendation to the office of the chairman.

While respondents oppose cell phone calls, they do favor other activities involving a personal mobile device on a flight:

- Send or receive emails: 74%

- Play music: 73%
- Send or receive texts: 70%
- General internet use (other than social networking websites): 70%
- Play games: 68%
- Play videos (other than video games): 59%
- Send or receive instant messages: 56%
- Use social networking websites: 53%
- Send or receive photos: 47%
- Purchase products or services: 45%
- Take photos: 42%
- Play podcasts: 42%
- Send or receive videos: 31%
- Record videos: 23%
- Make or receive phone calls: 21%

AIRPORT INVESTMENTS AND SPENDING PRIORITIES

With New York airspace the most congested in the country, and its delays contributing to one-half to three-quarters of all daily flight delays around the country, modernizing the three major airports in the New York area has become a national issue. Recently, Vice President Joe Biden compared LaGuardia to a “third world country,” Governor Cuomo pledged to take over improvements to New York airports, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey released a Capital Plan that focuses \$8 billion toward airport upgrades.

In light of these developments, the GGA survey asked respondents to rank their priorities for Federal Government spending on airport improvements in the New York metropolitan area.

The survey found that more than 50% think new air traffic control technology should be the Federal Government’s top spending priority for NYC airports. Other priorities include:

- Mass transit improvements to and from the airports: 21%
- More TSA agents and Pre-check expansion to relieve security lines: 21%
- New airport infrastructure like runways and terminal buildings: 11%

“We are encouraged by the fact that this survey reflects what we have been saying all along; bringing New York City area airports into the 21st Century starts with investing in NextGen technology to replace 1960’s radar technology and alleviate costly and unnecessary delays,” said Stephen Sigmund, GGA’s Executive Director.

When asked about the amount of money the Federal Government invests in improving airport infrastructure in New York and New Jersey, those surveyed were split evenly on whether the Government spent “enough” or “not enough”. However, almost twice as many respondents say the feds spend “too little” on airports compared to “too much”.

METHODOLOGY

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.