

## A New Airport?

### Confidential Instructions for the Senator from Emerald County (Democrat)

While you would not want anyone to take your support for granted, you are strongly in favor of building a new international airport in Pancake County, which would be substantially closer to Emerald City than Curly Airport, which is 75 miles away. An expanded airport in Pancake County at the location of the existing Silver Dollar airport would be only 45 miles away from Emerald City. This would be a significant improvement that could lead to a major boost to the Emerald City economy, provided that direct access from Emerald City to the new airport is provided. A state commitment to build high-speed road access is thus essential to your support for a new airport. Almost equally important, for environmental reasons, is high-speed rail access to the airport from Emerald City. An important part of road access is at the beginning of the route from downtown Emerald City, where there is currently inadequate capacity for traffic crossing the Ames River. The long-planned east-west tunnel is the best remedy for that. It will require \$500 million in state funding, and will take at least four years to build, so construction should begin as soon as possible. This tunnel is necessary for Emerald City to take full advantage of any airport to the east, so you can argue it should be an integral part of any highway upgrade plan.

Another big win for the County (and you) would be securing agreement to site the proposed new state biotechnology research center in Emerald County. This facility is likely to bring 1,000 construction jobs and 500-600 permanent jobs, as well as hundreds of millions of investment dollars over time. Tidal Flats, which adjoins Eastport County, argues that the biotech center should be sited near the many prestigious Eastport universities, but Emerald City also has three prestigious universities, and land costs near Emerald City are much lower. The cost of living in Emerald City is also lower, and many surveys rate it as a nicer place to live. There is every reason to select Emerald City, and you are counting particularly on the support of the Committee Chair, a long-time friend, whom you have supported on countless issues in the past.

Ultimately, your primary interest is to get a new airport in Pancake County, with easy and fast highway and rail access from Emerald and other counties. You will vote only for an airport bill that contains those provisions. Also important are funding for the tunnel under the Ames River and siting of the new biotech research center in Emerald City. You have been a supporter of both those projects for many years, and your failure to achieve either has weakened your political support. It would be difficult for you to vote for an airport bill if you were not successful with at least one of these projects.

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As far as other matters before the Committee, you support all those proposals included in S.B. 101, including those matters that direct the ATA to study various options, to the extent they can all be funded within the annual \$500 million budget surplus. Most deal with increasing access to the new airport, and maximum access is consistent with serving the citizens of Ames and insuring a profitable airport. The only financial proposal in the bill that is not for airport access relates to redeveloping Curly, and you accept the argument of the Senator from Tidal Flats that it should not be subject to the costs of restoring land that the state took to build an airport serving the citizens of all counties.

As for the proposed amendments to S.B. 101, your views are these:

### **Roads and Public Transit for Faraway, Pancake, and Serenity Counties**

You are opposed to all these proposals. They may be worthwhile, but they have nothing to do with the airport, and would lead to charges that they are in the bill to “buy” the votes of the senators from the counties involved, not to improve the airport. There is little to be gained in getting a bill approved by the Committee if it is rejected by the legislature on the grounds that it serves primarily the interests of the counties represented on the Committee, not the citizens of all counties.

### **Health Care for Faraway, Pancake, and Serenity Counties**

Your reaction to the various health care proposals is similar to your reaction to most of the road and transit proposals. You realize that the opioid epidemic, which is the concern underlying those proposals, is a major problem, both in human and financial terms, but you do not believe that problem should be addressed in a bill with a limited budget that is aimed at resolving the airport problem.

### **Summary of your interests and priorities**

Your primary interest is in obtaining agreement on a new airport in Pancake County to which your constituents will have high-speed highway and rail access. Other important interests are funding for the tunnel under the Ames River and siting of the new biotech research center in Emerald City.

In considering whether to vote for any proposed agreement for a new airport, you will have to decide whether that agreement, considered as a whole, contains provisions which would satisfy your constituents’ interests more than would the “no deal” alternative.