

1 **2022 Legislative Conference**
2 **Standing Committee on Transportation and Public Works**
3 **Resolution #2**

4 **Resolution Urging Legislative Support for Governor Kathy Hochul’s**
5 **Executive Budget Initiatives to Promote the Post-COVID Recovery and**
6 **Transformation of New York Airports**

7 **WHEREAS**, Governor Kathy Hochul released an Executive Budget that incorporates a
8 new Five-Year Transportation Capital Plan to support a variety of capital investments in
9 transportation infrastructure, including for the state’s airports; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the Executive Budget proposes an additional \$150 million to complete the
11 funding requirement for the \$250 million Upstate Airport Economic Development and
12 Revitalization program that will transform and modernize airports in Upstate New York
13 and foster regional economic development; and

14 **WHEREAS**, this initiative allocates \$230 million to projects that promote and
15 accelerate improvements at upstate commercial passenger service airports, and \$20
16 million through the Aviation Capital Grant Program spread over the next five years to
17 support safety, infrastructure, and economic development projects at smaller airports;
18 and

19 **WHEREAS**, airports are the gateways to our state driving business and attracting
20 tourists from all around the world and rebuilding, and modernizing New York airports
21 with these critical investments will allow for the continued transformation of our
22 airports into 21st century facilities, fueling economic growth for decades to come; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the Covid-19 pandemic was a shock to the worldwide aviation system and
24 hit New York airports particularly hard causing disruptions and new kinds of
25 inconveniences and hardships to the traveling public which now has airport managers
26 and designers rethinking the ways in which to respond and provide a better customer
27 experience; and

28 **WHEREAS**, faced with reduced revenues from declining passenger numbers, major
29 airlines running into financial difficulties and shifting to longer-range aircraft,
30 significant aviation sector job losses, domestic carriers growing their major hubs and
31 focusing on more profitable routes, smaller airports outside major cities are struggling
32 making it more difficult for upstate communities to attract or retain air service; and

33 **WHEREAS**, adding to the challenges is the necessity that airport infrastructure
34 projects reflect sustainably and resiliency to combat the risks of climate change; though
35 aviation represents less than 3 percent of the world’s carbon emissions, the aviation
36 industry is already migrating to biofuels and nearly every major airline is conducting
37 demonstration flights using alternative fuels while startups are experimenting with
38 electric planes; and

1 **WHEREAS**, airport managers and aviation companies are committing to advancing an
2 inclusive culture by actively seeking diverse voices and promoting practices that enable
3 everyone to excel so the industry will remain on the forefront of progress and innovation
4 empowering each individual to be part of a dynamic system that by its very nature
5 connects people with each other and with those of other nations around the world; and

6 **WHEREAS**, airport infrastructure funding sources include federal grants, operating
7 revenue from tenant leases and parking, the passenger facility charge fliers pay when
8 they purchase their plane tickets, aviation fuel sales and concession assessments, yet
9 airports have an infrastructure backlog of \$115 billion according to Airports Council
10 International; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the enhanced capital funding initiatives in the Executive Budget builds on
12 the success of the previous round of upstate airport revitalization awards first
13 announced in 2016, and compliments the ongoing transformation of LaGuardia and
14 John F. Kennedy airports into world class travel hubs; and

15 **WHEREAS**, this investment commitment by the state will assist airports and the
16 aviation communities in meeting their obligations to support business travelers and
17 tourism, attracting or retaining regularly scheduled commercial service to
18 disadvantaged areas, and adding conveniences and amenities for travelers when
19 weather events or public health restrictions result in delayed or cancelled flights, forcing
20 individual and families to spend long hours within the confines of an airport; and

21 **WHEREAS**, capital funding will also assist in addressing the demands to green airport
22 operations and achieve sustainability, create good paying permanent jobs and promote a
23 more diverse workforce, advance aviation education and career opportunities and
24 expand the benefits of general aviation by hosting flight schools and pilot training, and
25 basing of military and medical emergency response aircraft for mercy flight missions.

26 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the New York State Association of
27 Counties supports the inclusion of the airport capital appropriations announced by
28 Governor Hochul in her 2022-2023 Executive Budget and that they be adopted in their
29 entirety in the final state spending plan; and

30 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to member
31 counties for their consideration; and

32 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to
33 Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York State Legislature and all others deemed
34 necessary and proper.