

William F. White: Air National Guard adds to the vitality of Dane County Regional Airport

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I support the federal government stationing a squadron of F-35 fighter jets at Dane County Regional Airport. I have lived under the principal flight path for both commercial and military aircraft for over 35 years and I am very familiar with aviation necessities and movements.

When I moved into my home in 1982, I learned we were under the flight path and near the airport. I started to organize my neighborhood because of noise and perceived safety concerns and my immediate neighbor (who had lived in her house since 1951) said, "Bill, this airport has been here since the mid-1930s and you just got here 3 months ago." That set me back and I started to learn about the airport and how it relates to our community.

Through those efforts I was appointed by the County Executive to the Airport Commission in 1992 and was chair from 1994-2008. And I learned a lot.

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First, the presence of the Air Guard here provides double enhancement of emergency response and fire protection. The Air Guard has provided assistance to the civilian part of the airfield and the greater Madison community.

Second, the Air Guard has been a cooperative partner in mitigating the impact of their operations on the community. We (the Airport Staff and Commission) have worked cooperatively with the Guard to set flight patterns and protocols, similar to

what is done with the commercial aircraft, to lessen the impact on the community. It is interesting to note that the majority of complaints the airport receives about noise is from commercial aircraft, not military aircraft.

Third, while the Air Guard has some full-time personnel, the majority are citizens, who live and work here in our community; our neighbors and co-workers.

Finally, Dane County Regional Airport is a significant economic generator for our community.

With access to DCRA, we can have access to the world at large by a short trip to the airport. The presence of the Air National Guard only adds to the vitality of our airport.

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