

Congressman Jeff Van Drew Testimony
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing, and Urban Development

May 8th, 2024 10:00 AM

Good Morning. I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development. As Vice Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I have a special appreciation for the work that you do.

William J. Hughes FAA Technical Center

This year's FAA Reauthorization includes provisions that will codify the South Jersey's William J. Hughes FAA Technical Center, thereby making it permanent. This historic win for South Jersey will expand the Technical Center role and responsibilities within the FAA. We need to make smart investments to support this expanded mission. I advocated for such investments to be included in the President's Budget Request.

The FY25 President's Budget Request does in fact include historic levels of infrastructure funding for the Technical Center. I request the Committee match these levels provide the following funds from the FAA Facilities and Equipment Account:

- \$23.4 million for the **William J. Hughes Technical Center Laboratories**. These funds will be used to bring the Laboratories into compliance with power and security standards for the critical National Airspace Systems that are based at the Technical Center.
- \$39 million for the **William J. Hughes Technical Center Infrastructure Sustainment**. These funds will modernize the Main Electrical Utility Substation that powers the entire Technical Center.

My Technical Center funding request is bipartisan, also supported by my friend Congressman Donald Norcross who represents the neighboring district. Many of his constituents work at the Technical Center and I appreciate his support.

Community Project Funding

I also have six Community Project Funding requests under consideration by this Subcommittee. These are all priorities and I request they be funded at the full requested amount. I have included identifiers in my testimony to allow committee staff to easily locate these requests.

The first request is for \$4 million to construct a **Dental Hygiene School (#2767)** at Atlantic Cape Community College from the EDI Account. There is a serious need for dental hygienists in my area. I spent my entire private career as a dentist and this project is personally important to me. It also has a non-federal match of over \$2 million

from the Atlantic County government, who is contributing additional construction funds as well as equipment. This is my top request across all projects.

The second request is for \$2.5 million to design and prepare a site for an **Aviation Maintenance Training Academy** (#2786) from the EDI account. This project will train generations of much-needed aviation maintenance workers. This project is supported by the United States Air Force and has matching non-federal funds from private sector partners who are interested in recruiting from this facility.

My third request is \$650,000 for **City of Millville Baseball Field Safety Improvements** (#2789) from the EDI Account. Millville is famously the hometown of LA Angels player Mike Trout and several other MLB players. Baseball is their economic and cultural cornerstone. Their fields are deteriorated, with improper lighting, field conditions, and a lack of protective nets. This project will make these fields safe for generations of ballplayers.

My fourth request is \$800,000 for the **Wildwood Tram Cars** (#2806) from the transit account. The tram cars are a beloved and iconic fixture of the wildwood boardwalk. The requested funds will be used to replace 8 of the tram cars, equip them with hybrid engines, and make them ADA-compliant. The Wildwood Improvement District has advanced \$480,000 as a nonfederal funding match.

My fifth request is for \$4 million for the **Atlantic City Airport Rail Station and Cargo Spur** (#2809) from the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure account. These funds will design and engineer the preferred alternative from a feasibility report completed last year. It offers benefits in terms of intermodal transportation and economic development. It is strongly supported by many institutions including Stockton University and the AtlantiCare hospital system. The South Jersey Transportation Authority has advanced \$1 million in federal funds as a nonfederal match.

My final request is for \$1.76 million for the **Nabb Avenue Extension** (#2804) from the Highways account. This project also promotes intermodal connections but with the Millville Airport. Funds will be used to design 1.35 miles of new roadway that will redirect congestion from the downtown Millville area and promote commerce in underserved areas of the City. Cumberland County has advanced \$445,400 as a nonfederal match.

Thank you very much for your consideration.