

# O'Hare Needs Another

## CIVIC COMMITTEE

*of The Commercial Club of Chicago*



**An open letter to:**

**The Honorable Mayor Richard M. Daley  
The Honorable Governor George H. Ryan**

**The Honorable James "Pate" Philip  
The Honorable Emil Jones  
The Honorable Michael J. Madigan  
The Honorable Lee A. Daniels**

We, the undersigned members of the Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago, believe that the inadequacy of runway capacity at O'Hare Airport – now and in the future – is the single most important economic issue facing the Chicago region. We urge you to work out arrangements that will include reconfiguring O'Hare by adding at least one additional east-west parallel runway.

Businesses and citizens in and around Chicago rely on and benefit from an efficient aviation system, anchored by the hub operations at O'Hare Airport. O'Hare has become the primary economic engine of the region; and a new runway would generate an additional \$10 billion annually, and create over 100,000 new jobs.

Moreover, O'Hare is today plagued by delays – both weather-related and otherwise – which are in part the consequence of inadequate runways. These delays frustrate travelers and impose tremendous costs on our businesses, and will get worse over the next several years as the demand for air travel grows and our runway capacity problems become more severe. Increasing numbers of travelers will avoid O'Hare; the airlines will schedule more flights via other metropolitan airports; and companies will locate their businesses and facilities elsewhere.

The time to act was yesterday. Other major American cities – Atlanta (which now has the busiest airport in the world), Dallas, and St. Louis – are building or planning to build additional runways at their airports. Denver has a new international airport. Chicago cannot afford to fall further behind. A new airport in Peotone or an expanded Gary airport for point-to-point traffic may be good ideas; but neither would be an adequate substitute for expanding runway capacity at O'Hare.

Our companies employ over 1 million people who live and work throughout the six-county region or who use O'Hare airport for business or personal travel. We pay hundreds of millions of dollars annually in taxes to our home communities and to the state of Illinois. We have a huge stake in the future economic health of our region.

We believe your records as the highest executive branch and legislative leaders in Illinois and Chicago may well be judged by history largely on the basis of whether you break the political logjam and settle this runway issue. We pledge our help and support to you as you work to achieve this goal.