



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
16 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0016

Janet T. Mills
GOVERNOR

Bruce A. Van Note
COMMISSIONER

May 14, 2019

D. Kirk Shaffer, ARP-1
Office of the Associate Administrator for Airports
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Associate Administrator Shaffer:

I am writing to express the Maine Department of Transportation's concerns with a proposed plan circulating that would downgrade the New England Region Airports Division to a District Office within the Eastern Region.

Maine is a rural state with thirty-five airports within the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). With significant FAA support, MaineDOT is about to embark on development of an Aviation System Plan Update to guide public and private sector aeronautical investments through 2030. Our small state office staff (2.3 FTE's), as well as our municipal and county airport sponsors, are highly reliant upon the context-sensitive expertise of the New England Region staff, who take the time to meet with sponsors on site and understand each airport's opportunities and challenges.

Maine's low population density and related activity levels present a chronic competitive disadvantage when compared with more populated states. If the New England Division is merged with the Eastern Region, we fear that awareness of small rural airports will be lost and that our needs will not compete well with the more populated New York and mid-Atlantic regions.

I would be grateful to be apprised of changes being contemplated and whether our concerns are being included in any reorganization deliberations. I may be reached by email at maryann.hayes@maine.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "MAHayes".

Mary Ann Hayes
Aviation Director

cc: Senator Susan Collins
Senator Angus King
Congresswoman Chellie Pingree
Congressman Jarod Golden
Commissioner Bruce A. Van Note