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9.1.07

Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
PARLIAMENT HOUSE, 2600

Dear Sirs,

My local Member of Parliament has advised constituents that there is an inquiry into the Airports Amendments Bill 2006, and that if concerned we should make a submission.

I am very concerned at what I see as development that are not in the public interest being allowed at airports.

Foremost in our minds must be the fact that airports are transport terminals and that the prime consideration at all times must be safety. That safety may be in several forms:

- Ensuring that the air pattern is flight paths is not suddenly changed (as I understand now occurs in Canberra) such that landing safety may be jeopardised.
- Ensuring public safety is not worsened through overcrowding
- Ensuring safety for ingress/egress in the worst case scenario of a plane crash or terminal fire.

Given those considerations what I see being allowed at Adelaide Airport appals me. I am not aware of any studies on wind patters but I would be surprised if the added peripheral buildings have not changed the air patterns and are making landings riskier. Even if the amount is minor, it is a risk we do not need to take, and ought not to take.

Fortunately Adelaide is as yet immune to the internal almost shopping malls allowed, e.g. in Sydney. We should be discouraging attendance at airports, not be doing anything to encourage it.

My major concern however is the fringe traffic issues. The peripheral shopping centres allowed (Ikea and Harborside) are both high attractors of vehicles and people, all of whom would also need to escape in event of a "disaster". I am sure the local Council would have rejected such developments on that basis if they had any say in the matter (and the arrogance of the Commonwealth re such local planning and payment of rates are other issues I do not seek to address).

Equally there is an obligation to ensure that nothing on the site adds to local traffic risks. The Ikea sign, in addition to being an eyesore, seeks to attract attention and hence to distract drivers. That will potentially lead to an accident on a key access road, which may just block necessary egress from an emergency. I am sure the Council would not have approved it, and can not demand it be removed.

We, the public, have a right to have certain facilities provided and not degraded. Airports are such a case. The firms that bought leases knew the terms that prevailed and should have to abide by them. If they don't and seek, and are allowed, added developments that generate added revenues for them, then not only has the Government jeopardised our safety unnecessarily but it has also allowed itself to be financially naive and to have sold us short.

Yours sincerely,

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