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Williamsport Regional Airport Responds to Airline Announcement

WILLIAMSPORT, PA (August 20, 2020).

Airport Executive Director Richard Howell, A.A.E. has issued a statement in light of American Airlines recent announcement regarding impending future flight service from the Williamsport Regional Airport.

“The move by American Airlines to include the Williamsport Regional Airport on their list of *possible* air service suspensions is obviously disappointing. Only two days ago we celebrated a new direction and improvement to the region for air travelers with our American Airlines Charlotte flights. In the month of July, even before having these flights, our enplanement levels averaged 52%, nearly double the number of passengers checked through TSA security on a national level. Our regional airport has made great strides in coming back after the initial surge of the COVID 19 pandemic. The business people and the leisure travelers of the region have shown they are poised to work and recreate in the new, cleaner, refined environments of our socially distanced and proactively cleaned facilities. Our airport can service a 10-county area with a population of nearly half a million people and it is vital to our region that we continue to be able to service our region.

While the message from American clearly indicates that Williamsport is on the list of possible suspensions, we should keep in mind that we believe this is based in part on the stalled extension of the Federal Coronavirus Aid package. In our communications with officials, they have indicated they wish not to remove AA infrastructure from the terminal. Keeping said infrastructure will allow service to continue for the time being and the continuation of service should American decide that the political/economic landscape suits ongoing operation.

Business leaders and air travelers have already reached out to us with a need and a passion to see air service continue for our region. Our communities and community leaders are encouraged to reach out to their local legislator to voice support for legislation that will provide a positive economic working environment for the regional airport.

For the time being and until further notice, air service is **STILL** officially operational and available. The Williamsport Regional Airport, its Authority Board and staff, *remains resolute* in working with its airline carriers and our local and regional political leaders to find a workable solution to maintaining air service in the region and our community at large.”

It should be noted that the Williamsport Regional Airport and American Airlines follow strict safety protocols for the health and well-being of travelers. The airport requires face coverings in the

terminal and asks travelers to observe the physical distancing policy of 6 feet or more at all times. Sanitizing stations are available through the building and enhanced cleaning of multiple touch surfaces takes place throughout the day. Protective shielding has been installed at places like ticket counters and in the security area. The airport takes these steps in order to place traveler safety and peace of mind as its top priority. American has also implemented multiple layers of protection, including enhanced cleaning protocols on airplanes and the enforcement of face coverings. Every aircraft is disinfected, including hand-cleaning seat buckles, seats, tray tables and other surfaces. Effective July 29, the airline also expanded its face covering policy to require all customers over the age of 2 to wear face coverings at airports and on board, strengthening the airline's commitment to keep customers and team members safe.

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The Williamsport Regional Airport has been in operation since 1929. The new terminal re-opened with a ribbon cutting on Sunday October 6th, 2019, and since its inception has been the local airport for an estimated 40,000 travelers annually. The Williamsport Regional Airport (IPT) is located at 724 Airport Road, Montoursville PA 17754. For more information on flights, travel procedures and guidelines please visit www.flyipt.com, connect with them on Facebook: www.facebook.com/flyipt or call (570) 368-2444.