

NAACP NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MS NAACP Questions Motivation Behind New Bill Initiating State Takeover Of the Jackson Municipal Airport

After reviewing the senate bill to create a Jackson Metropolitan Airport Authority that would remove all power from the existing Jackson Wiley-Evers International Airport Authority, we are questioning the true motivation behind the bill's creation. Historically, board takeovers only happen when there are issues of malfeasance, but there are no such issues in this case. We are supremely dismayed over this unprecedented power grab of a governmental entity's assets. There has been no evidence given of corruption, mismanagement, or financial distress. Neither has there been a request by the City of Jackson for such a merger. These facts leave us no other choice but to conclude that race is a motivating factor in this attempted takeover.

In addition, the bill's qualifications for commissioners is both insulting and inconsistent with state policies concerning qualifications to serve on such commissions. Currently, the airport authority has experienced stable management and its commissioners have carried out their fiduciary duties in ways that promote the operations of the airport, specifically its role in selecting the Executive Administrator. Commissioners also represent the interests of the taxpayer constituents of the city of Jackson.

The airport exists within the corporate limits of the City of Jackson. The City of Jackson purchased the land for the airport in the 1960's. Since this time, the citizens of Jackson financed the development of the airport through their hard earned tax dollars. This has been a long-term investment for the Capitol City

and we see no reason why this has to change, nor have we been given adequate reason that it *should* change.

We support the Jackson Municipal Airport's autonomy over the Jackson Wiley Evers airport and we actively oppose attempts by the Mississippi legislature to create a new board to control its operation.

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Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. Its members throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, conducting voter mobilization and monitoring equal opportunity in the public and private sectors. For more information about the Mississippi NAACP or news stories, call 601-353-8452 or log on to www.naacpms.org. Like us on Facebook by searching Mississippi NAACP and follow us on Twitter @MSNAACP.