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June 12, 2003

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Authors Legislation To Prevent Indigo Airlines Or Any
Similar Service From Operating At Northern NJ Airport

Washington, DC – In a major legislative victory that will improve Northern New Jersey's homeland security and prevent the character of Teterboro Airport from changing, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that he has gotten the U.S. House of Representatives to approve a permanent ban on all scheduled charter service operations at the Northern New Jersey airport. Rothman, who authored the legislation which was attached to the Aviation Authorization bill that passed the House by a margin of 418-8 on Wednesday, has been leading the fight to close the loophole at Teterboro that allowed Indigo Airlines to offer scheduled service under the guise of a charter operation. Rothman designed the legislation so that it effectively bans Indigo or any other scheduled charter service from operating at Teterboro Airport.

"I am delighted that my colleagues in the House of Representatives responded to the national security threat the scheduled charter loophole posed, and backed my measure that will keep the people of the New York metropolitan area safe and prevent Teterboro from becoming the fourth major metropolitan area airport," Rothman said. "Having the House adopt this ban is an enormous step forward toward making sure that Indigo doesn't try this again at Teterboro Airport, and that no other airline from anywhere else in America could try to establish scheduled charter service there."

Despite a rule barring scheduled service at Teterboro Airport, Indigo Airlines used a loophole in Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations to initiate scheduled charter service there twice in the last three years. While Indigo suspended its service at Teterboro last week, the loophole remains for the airline or any copycat service to start operating at Teterboro Airport. Rothman's legislation seals the loophole and prevents Indigo or any other scheduled charter service from operating at Teterboro Airport.

In an effort to win their support, Rothman met personally with U.S. Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta, spoke daily with TSA Administrator, Admiral James Loy, and met and spoke with on a daily basis with other top Department of Transportation and Department of Homeland Security officials. Rothman got Secretary Mineta to write a letter to Admiral Loy asking for the TSA to review Indigo's operations at Teterboro Airport because the airline posed potential security risks and also threatened to change the nature of the general aviation airport.

Rothman has been calling on the FAA to uphold the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's (PA) longtime ban on scheduled service, while also calling on the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to stop Indigo's service because of security concerns. Indigo had offered tickets to random customers over the phone and Internet, and because it operated under the guise of a charter airline, its passengers were not subject to the rigorous security checks mandated by Congress at all major airports in the United States.

"This legislation sends a clear message that the people of Northern New Jersey will not permit anyone to change the character of Teterboro Airport. We will fight with all our strength to prevent jets from flying in and out of our local general aviation airport every minute, on a regular basis," Rothman said. "The passage of this legislation is a victory for the people of Northern New Jersey who have had their quality of life threatened by a loophole that allowed scheduled charter operations at Teterboro Airport."

The Aviation Authorization bill is expected to be taken up by the Senate later this month.

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