

***TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE/
POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

***PRESENTATION
ITEM V. A***



FRESNO YOSEMITE
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

August 28, 2009

Russell C. Widmar, AAE, Director of Aviation
City of Fresno Airports Department

Juliette Kayyem, Assistant Secretary
Office of Intergovernmental Programs
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington D.C. 20528

Re: Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FYI)
Non-reimbursable Port of Entry Status

Dear Assistant Secretary Kayyem:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Council of Fresno County Governments (COG) to thank you for your response to their letter which was jointly signed and submitted to Secretary Napolitano regarding non-reimbursable Port of Entry status for Fresno Yosemite International Airport (FYI).

The COG, which is comprised of mayors and representatives from each of the ~~fifteen~~ incorporated cities within Fresno County and the Chairman of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, has been very supportive of our efforts, and it was helpful and informative for them to receive the information you shared regarding U.S. Customs and Border Protection's recent review of FYI's status. We are extremely grateful for the efforts that your office and CBP managers, in particular, Director Richard Vigna, have made in reviewing our account and identifying errors. I know I speak for the entire City of Fresno management team, as well as everyone in the region who benefits from the services our airport provides, when I say how much we appreciate your attention and consideration.

We continue to believe that the workload at FYI has exceeded, and will continue to exceed, the CBP-established workload standards for Ports of Entry, and we therefore believe that FYI should be converted to non-reimbursable status. We will continue to press for this recognition and look forward to continuing our discussions with you regarding cost-sharing arrangements as we work toward our goal of full non-reimbursement status.

Thanks again for your timely and helpful letter. We certainly appreciate the professionalism and priorities with which the Department of Homeland Security is tasked, and we look forward to working with you and assisting your staff in any way we can.

Very truly yours,

Russell C. Widmar, AAE
Director of Aviation

cc: Thomas S. Winkowski, *Assistant Commissioner, Field Operations, US Customs and Border Protection*
Richard Vigna, *Director, Field Operations, US Customs and Border Protection*
Trinidad Rodriguez, *Chairman, Council of Fresno County Governments*



Homeland Security

August 4, 2009

Mr. Trinidad Rodriquez
Chairman
Council of Fresno County Governments
2035 Tulare Street
Fresno, California 93721

Dear Mr. Rodriquez:

Thank you for your June 25, 2009 letter requesting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) grant the Fresno Yosemite International (FYI) Airport non-reimbursable port of entry status. DHS's U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has reviewed the circumstances surrounding the User Fee Airport status of FYI and understands the importance of this issue to the City of Fresno business community.

Over the past three years, CBP has received several similar requests by, or on behalf of, FYI regarding FYI's User Fee Airport status, staffing levels, and workload. To fully evaluate the situation, CBP held several internal meetings and also engaged representatives of FYI to discuss possible modifications to an existing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). If adopted, the recommendation to reduce the number of billable staff at FYI from 10 full-time equivalent positions to five billable positions would serve to reduce the financial burden on the airport while maintaining the number of CBP staff currently assigned. Though not a cost-sharing solution, FYI will benefit from some financial relief. Due to the agriculture screening requirements at FYI, the agriculture specialist positions will be funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture user fee process.

While DHS supports the proposed change to the MOA, the Department is currently not able to support a change of FYI's status from a User Fee Airport to that of permanent port of entry. Given the limited workload associated with only one international flight per day at FYI, as well as the absence of another nearby port, it is neither fiscally prudent, nor in the best interest of the U.S. Government, to incur port of entry costs at FYI. DHS will reconsider non-reimbursable status in the future if there is any significant growth in the workload at FYI.

Thank you again for your letter. The co-signers of your letter will receive separate, identical responses. DHS hopes to continue to foster a close working relationship with you on this and other homeland security matters. Should you need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 282-3910.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Juliette Kayyem", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Juliette Kayyem
Assistant Secretary

RECEIVED

AUG 11 2009

BY:
FRESNO COG