

NTUI NEWS RELEASE

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TAXPAYERS OPPOSE “BLANK CHECK” PEOTONE AIRPORT BILL SB 2981

CHICAGO—The president of Illinois’ largest taxpayer organization today asked members of the Illinois House of Representatives to vote “NO” on **SB 2981**, sponsored by St. Sen. **Debbie Halvorson** (D-40, Crete), which was quickly approved in the State Senate and now is being considered by the Illinois House.

“SB 2981 has been sponsored in the Illinois House by Chicago Machine boss **Michael Madigan** (D-22, Chicago),” said **Jim Tobin**, president of National Taxpayers United of Illinois (NTUI). “Madigan reportedly has extended the deadline for a vote on the bill until the end of the legislative session, April 7. If passed, the bill would give a blank check, drawn on local taxpayers, to the Peotone Airport boondoggle.”

The bill would create a development district around a proposed Peotone Airport that is literally years away from federal approval. The proposed district would have the capacity to issue bonds and pass through funds to IDOT, which in turn, could “raid” the Illinois road fund for up to \$1 billion.

“SB 2981 would spawn a new layer of government that could leave state and local taxpayers footing the bill for more than \$1 billion of infrastructure for an airport that may never get built,” said **George Ochsenfeld**, president of the Will County community group STAND (Shut This Airport Nightmare Down). “Since 1985, four gubernatorial administrations have spent more than \$100 million in planning ‘studies’ to justify this airport. The Peotone plan now is for a ‘starter’ airport that would replicate what already exists in nearby Gary, Indiana.”

“The Illinois House should vote against the airport development district,” said Ochsenfeld, “and demand that the Blagojevich administration begin to take a serious look at what happens to Eastern Will County if an airport is *not* built.”

“SB 2981 reportedly was a product of closed-door meetings by public officials in the five affected communities of Beecher, Monee, Peotone, Crete, and University Park,” said NTUI’s Tobin. “No input was solicited from members of the public that would be affected in eastern Will County. I strongly urge members of the Illinois House of Representatives to vote “NO” on this bill that would give birth to a colossal billion dollar boondoggle.”

Founded in 1976, NTUI is the largest taxpayer organization in Illinois
with over 10,000 members and affiliation with more than 200 local taxpayer groups.

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