



Monroe County Legislature

VINCENT R. FELDER
DEMOCRATIC MINORITY LEADER

KARLA F. BOYCE
LEGISLATOR – DISTRICT 5

July 30, 2020

To The Honorable
Monroe County Legislature
39 West Main Street
Rochester, New York 14614

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No. <u>200256</u>
Not to be removed from the Office of the Legislature Of Monroe County
Committee Assignment
ENV. & PUB. WORKS -L

RE: Authorization to Rename the Greater Rochester International Airport Located at 1200 Brooks Avenue to the “Frederick Douglass - Greater Rochester International Airport”

Honorable Legislators:

To know where we are going, we must first remember where we have been. This community’s image speaks volumes – not just about our history, but also the direction we are headed. There is potentially no greater symbol of our image than our Airport, which serves as the front door to our community.

There have long been discussions about changing the name of the Greater Rochester International Airport to honor Frederick Douglass, one of the most renowned and influential leaders ever to call our community home. An online petition garnering support for the name change started just three-weeks ago by Mr. Richard Glaser and has amassed thousands of signatures. The petition reads:

“Frederick Douglass, author, orator, and national leader for the abolitionist movement, lived in Rochester from 1847 to 1872, where he began publishing, North Star. During this period, he served as an advisor to President Lincoln, fought for the adoption of constitutional amendments granting voting rights and other civil liberties to African Americans, and advocated for women’s suffrage at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848.

“A former slave, Douglass is considered the most influential African American of the 19th century. He is known across the globe for his fight to end slavery and his advocacy for the unrealized foundational principles of our country.

“Douglass’s message might be more relevant today than ever since the struggles he fought for remain ongoing. His words and actions continue to inspire us to rise to a higher vision of ourselves and our nation.

“I support renaming Rochester’s gateway Frederick Douglass International Airport, an act which I believe will honor one of our country’s greatest citizens and deliver a message of hope to the world.”

We stand with the thousands of online petition signers and many more community members who have expressed their support for changing the name of the Airport in honor of Frederick Douglass. Therefore, we recommend that this Honorable Body approve a resolution to change the name of the Greater Rochester International Airport Located at 1200 Brooks Avenue to the "Frederick Douglass - Greater Rochester International Airport."

In addition to changing the name of the Airport, we recommend that this Honorable Body authorize the placement of educational materials within the Airport to allow travelers to learn about the life and legacy of Frederick Douglass.

The Airport shall maintain its International Airport designation in accordance with the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 19, Chapter I, Part 122, Subpart B – Classes of Airports (19 CFR § 122.11).

The specific legislative actions required are:

1. Change the name of the Greater Rochester International Airport Located at 1200 Brooks Avenue to the "Frederick Douglass - Greater Rochester International Airport."
2. Authorize the placement of educational materials within the Airport to allow travelers to learn about the life and legacy of Frederick Douglass.
3. Authorize the Monroe County Airport Authority to take appropriate steps to effectuate the name change in an economical and reasonable manner.


The provisions of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act shall be complied with prior to this Honorable Body undertaking, funding, or approving the action in this referral.

This proposal will require no additional net County support in the current Monroe County budget.

Respectfully Submitted,



Vincent R. Felder
Democratic Minority Leader
District 22 - Rochester



Karla F. Boyce
Monroe County Legislator
District 5 - Mendon