



Strategic Plan

August 19, 2015



SECTION ONE

Strategic Plan Purpose and Background

The Senate Aviation Caucus presently comprises of 25 Pennsylvania senators (see appendix) with a common interest in promoting Pennsylvania aviation and ensuring that there is a strong aviation focus in Pennsylvania’s General Assembly. The caucus is particularly committed to maximizing aviation’s economic impact across the commonwealth.

Purpose

The Senate Caucus Strategic Plan was developed to achieve two overarching objectives:

1. To advance an **issues-based focus** for the caucus to effectively carry out its mission, and
2. To define a **supporting implementation/organizational approach** capable of sustaining and strengthening the caucus.

This is not a conventional strategic plan such as those associated with implementing organizations and executive agencies. Legislative bodies typically establish direction through bills and resolutions, and that direction is

This strategic plan was prepared through technical assistance provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

implemented by other entities. It is, however, important for the caucus to develop a shared sense of direction, priorities, and approaches to most effectively achieve desired results. This focus is best achieved through a collaborative strategic planning effort.

Background

Senate Staff and PennDOT leadership recognize the need for greater consideration of aviation as a critically important transportation mode. Historically, highways and bridges have had a high degree of legislative attention, as



has public transportation in recent years. This perceived need was coupled with a caucus success (Act 52 of 2013) that underscored aviation’s economic impact.

The caucus successfully carried out a legislative initiative for Act 52, the aircraft parts and maintenance sales tax exemption. This was a significant aviation policy achievement that made the need for and benefits of a strong aviation voice within the General Assembly all the more apparent. PennDOT also recognized the value of a robust consideration of aviation within the General Assembly and the challenges associated with sustaining an ongoing and focused caucus. PennDOT, as an executive agency, obviously cannot provide ongoing support to the caucus (although PennDOT did provide technical assistance through its consultant resources for this strategic plan’s development). Act 89 provided additional legislative impetus related to the caucus as it included a priority focus on Pennsylvania’s multimodal transportation system, creating a PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Services and expanded funding sources.

Need for the Aviation Caucus

The Senate Aviation Caucus satisfies an important need and closes a significant gap. Pennsylvania has an Aviation Council and an Aviation Advisory Committee. The former is an association primarily made up of airport operators and the latter is an advisory body to PennDOT. Unlike either of these groups, the Senate Aviation Caucus provides a strategic forum for policymakers to consider the full range

The Senate Aviation Caucus provides a strategic forum for policymakers to consider the full range of aviation issues— economic development, technology, local government, research, etc.

of aviation issues, including economic development, technology, local government, research, etc. Further, as part of its broad legislative oversight responsibility, the caucus can directly benefit PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), and other agencies. It is important to note that DCED has a strong interest in aviation-related economic development and an interest in this strategic plan. DCED continues to promote the sales tax exemption as an economic development incentive and monitors its benefits.

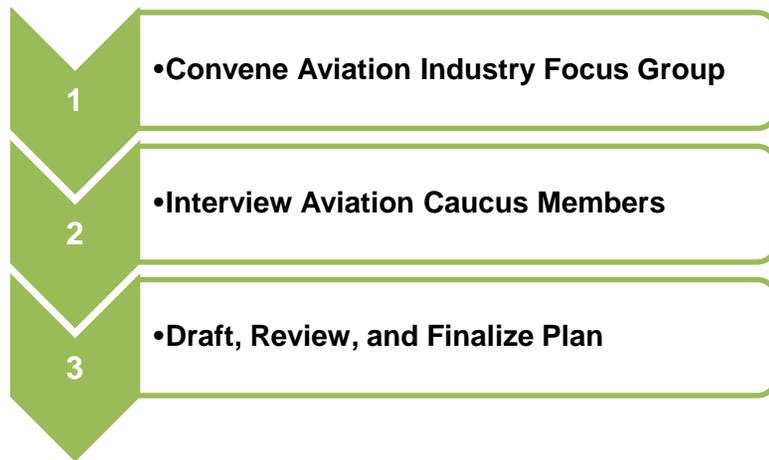
Plan Design and Organization

The plan is designed primarily for brevity and ease of updating. The **Aviation Issues Focus Areas** and the **Implementation** sections are the plan’s core components. Each is intended to be dynamic for ease of updating along with a **Progress Action Tracker** that appears at the end of

the Implementation Section. The Progress Action Tracker provides a structured approach to identify, track, and communicate caucus activities.

Plan Development Approach

The strategic plan was developed through a three-step process, depicted below and described at right.



1) Aviation Industry Focus Group

An aviation focus group was held at the Main Capitol in Harrisburg on December 8, 2014, to identify a wide range of aviation issues for potential caucus consideration and to provide some initial perspective regarding effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. A pre-focus group digital survey was sent to participants. The results of the focus group were the foundation for the second step.

2) Caucus Member Interviews

In March 2015 the project consultant interviewed nine of the caucus senators and several staff members to review the findings of the focus group and to solicit their perspectives on aviation issues and how the caucus should function. These interviews were intended to get a reasonable cross-section of senator viewpoints as a key input for plan drafting. A summary of the interview results was prepared as a technical work paper.

3) Plan Drafting and Review

The final step entailed the drafting and vetting of the plan document with Senate Aviation Caucus staff and PennDOT’s Bureau of Aviation Director.

SECTION TWO

Senate Aviation Caucus Mission and Vision

The Senate Aviation Caucus mission (reason for being) and vision (future aspiration) provide an important starting point for the strategic plan. Each is articulated here and is

intended to reflect the sense of purpose and direction expressed in numerous discussions throughout the planning process.

Caucus Mission

- The Senate Aviation Caucus exists so that the Pennsylvania General Assembly is sufficiently informed and knowledgeable on the many dynamic aviation issues and opportunities that impact the commonwealth.

Caucus Vision

- To provide outstanding legislative leadership and visibility for aviation issues to benefit the aviation industry—in both the private and public sectors—and the communities and citizens of the commonwealth.

SECTION THREE
Aviation Issue Focus Areas

From a wide range of aviation issues, five Senators have been chosen as the initial focus areas as the plan moves to implementation. Each Issue Focus Area has designated a “champion” from among the caucus members.



	Initial Issue Focus Area	Senate Champion	Notes
1	Aviation Economic Development and Community Linkages	Senator Boscola Senator Browne	<p>This was by far the issue area of greatest interest in focus group and senator interviews. Possible topics for consideration include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job creation • Workforce development • Establishing a greater understanding of the aviation industry sector—business types, suppliers, etc. • Exports/global trade • Reviewing the impacts of Act 52
2	Aviation Education and Awareness/Research and Technology	Senator Yaw	<p>This focus area is also very broad, recognizing the need for a greater understanding of aviation’s benefits to the commonwealth as well as establishing a base of knowledge regarding how our educational institutions may strategically leverage aviation for economic benefit and to enhance Pennsylvania’s competitive position.</p> <p>This focus area also includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leveraging Pennsylvania’s research strength as a strategy to further promote aviation. • Achieving a greater understanding of dynamic technology developments such as the use of drones for agricultural, delivery, and other purposes. • Learning more about Pennsylvania resources such as The Pennsylvania College of Technology’s Aviation Program.
3	General Aviation	Senator Bartolotta	<p>Pennsylvania has many general aviation (GA) airports that provide important services for business and other purposes. Senator Bartolotta has several GA airports in her district and is a pilot. PennDOT has been a strong GA advocate for many years and provides airport improvement grants that are not funded by the FAA Airport Improvement Program. GA is a very broad area that is important to Pennsylvania businesses who base corporate aircraft at GA airports, charters, flight instruction, etc.</p>
4	Air Service Development	Senator Folmer	<p>Commercial air service is a very challenging and dynamic issue of great importance to Pennsylvania communities, businesses, and residents.</p>

Issues Inventory – For Future Consideration

The following list includes the wide range of possible issues for caucus consideration. The list simply provides a starting point or reference for the caucus to consider as it moves on to other issues in the future. Examples of topics within the broader issues are listed. Some of these were identified by the industry focus group that met during the plan’s development in December 2014. Some of the sub-topics were identified as part of the industry focus group held late in 2014. Caucus staff should refine this list over time and maintain it as an Issues Inventory to guide future activities.

1) Aviation-related economic development

- a. Job creation
- b. Workforce development
- c. Exports/global markets
- d. Pennsylvania’s aerospace industry
- e. Impacts of Act 52 (and possibly other legislation, without crossing jurisdictional boundaries with standing committees and subcommittees)
- f. Aviation fuel sales trends
- g. Manufacturing opportunities
- h. State promotion – national conferences

2) Aviation policies and regulations

- a. Aviation regulations impacting communities, and vice-versa
- b. Federal policy/regulations

- c. Long-term issues and trends

3) Aviation funding and finance

- a. Potential new sources of funding and finance for various aviation related initiatives
- b. Understanding funding needs and resource limitations
- c. Municipal Authority Act relationship
- d. Act 89 funding review
- e. Customer Facility Charges as a possible funding source
- f. County-level funding mechanisms

4) Aviation in state and regional transportation planning

- a. PennDOT Bureau of Aviation relationship / resource in relation to planning
- b. Sufficiency of aviation as an economic priority or focus area for planning and plans
- c. Aviation grants

Caucus staff should refine this list over time and maintain it as an Issues Inventory to guide future activities.

- d. Increasing the aviation focus among Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Rural Planning Organizations, and other organizations involved in economic development planning.
- e. Modal coordination and integration—airports and other modes
- f. Road improvements supporting airports—intermodal connectivity

5) Airport/legislative relationships

6) Connections with other transportation modes

7) Airport and surrounding land-use compatibility

- a. Airports as business hubs
- b. Airport Hazard Zoning
- c. Development/land/use/transportation connection
- d. Financing/economic development agencies
- e. Incentives for compatible and complementary land use

8) Airport/community relationships

- a. Aviation as a key component of regional economic development plans
- b. Funding/marketing
- c. Technical assistance
- d. Differentiating airport types and functions serving communities

- e. Best practices / research for airport and community relations

9) Technical assistance for airports

- a. Data to measure success
 - i. Sales tax exemption
- b. Advocacy/promotion

10) Aviation research

- a. Best practices in other states (on a routine basis for possible emulations)
- b. The future of drones
- c. E-commerce and aviation
- d. Setting a regular research agenda or direction
- e. Public-private partnerships
- f. Pennsylvania universities’ roles/capabilities
- g. Technology

11) Airport performance measures

- a. Success = increase in jobs/economic activity
- b. Consider possible performance measures for Caucus Strategic Plan
- c. Funding
 - BOA/Collaborate with PennDOT
 - Statewide

12) Airport authority capacity/board development

SECTION FOUR Plan Implementation

Caucus members who were interviewed as part of the plan development process acknowledge the importance and potential of the Senate Aviation Caucus. The need for and the benefits of a strong, sustained, and well-implemented plan were also recognized. Clearly, the plan is supported; the challenge is sustaining both leadership and staff support during implementation over the coming months and years. As noted elsewhere, strategic planning poses special challenges for a legislative body, especially in terms of strong and effective implementation.

This section of the plan addresses how to effectively move forward in light of the recognized challenges, focusing on realistic, feasible approaches. Implementation is addressed

in terms of “Organization and Staffing” and “Activities and Functions.” In Section Five, the Progress Action Tracker provides a basic planning and management tool that staff can use to plan and execute specific activities.



Activities and Functions						
Information Meetings	Surveys of Caucus Members	Aviation Site Visits	Caucus Communication	PennDOT BOA Interaction	Resolutions, Policy Positions, and Legislative Proposals	Caucus Calendar and Action Tracker

Organizational and Staffing Approach

1) Caucus Leadership

Caucus Co-Chairs Argall and Folmer will provide overall leadership direction for the caucus. Over the next year their personal involvement will be vital to ensure that plan implementation gets traction and moves forward.

2) Core Leadership Team

It is recommended that for at least a year or two an ad hoc Core Leadership Team be formed comprised of the co-chairs and the champions of the four initial issue focus areas. These five senators will have the broad responsibility of ensuring that each of the four selected focus areas gets traction. This will be achieved primarily through the activities and functions discussed below.

3) Staff Support

The efforts of caucus leadership and the Core Leadership Team must be supported by their respective staff, with Senator Argall’s and Folmer’s staff providing overall staff

leadership. An appropriate staff person should be designated by each Senator as he or she agrees to a champion role. Staff support could be further augmented by the staff of other caucus senators involved in the respective issue focus areas. Broadly, the staff will be responsible for planning and carrying out the various activities listed below.

Activities and Functions

Ideally, the Senate Aviation Caucus will outline an overall schedule that spans each two-year legislative session. This could generally follow the sequence of holding informational meetings, drafting resolutions and bills, and conducting other activities such as those briefly described below.

It is important to note that these activities have been vetted and shaped through the caucus interviews and, as such, typically reflect activities and functions that the senators deem valuable and of interest to them.

1) Information Meetings

The caucus will hold informational meetings on topics of interest for each issue area under consideration. This provides a productive way for members to become informed regarding key aviation issues and trends. This would also provide a forum for important topics. It is recommended that each informational meeting produce a summary of key points that is distributed among all caucus members and others. A caucus web site should be considered for exchanging and updating key information. Topical meetings might also be held off-site at aviation locations (see #3 below) and engage chambers of commerce, local leaders, and other key stakeholders.



2) Periodic Surveys of Caucus Members

Conducting periodic surveys of caucus members will help identify topics of interest and areas of willing involvement. This may be especially important and practical early on as a means to reach out to those senators and staff who were not interviewed.

3) Visits to Airports and Aviation Businesses

Caucus members indicated that their knowledge of the aviation industry would be enhanced by occasional visits and/or tours of airports and other aviation-sector facilities. Periodic tours will be scheduled throughout the commonwealth and could be held in conjunction with caucus meetings. It is recognized that it will be challenging to get all caucus members to attend an airport visit or tour. Staff will periodically schedule events at various locations to encourage the involvement of member senators and to make these visits as convenient as reasonably possible. This can be a combination of airport visits and tours as well as visits to aviation manufacturers, the Penn College

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aviation program, etc. PennDOT has offered to host a meeting at the state hangar at Capital City Airport, which is only four miles from the Main Capitol. SARAA, the regional airport authority that operates Capital City, is also a willing host. SARAA also operates HIA, Franklin County, and Gettysburg airports and has offered to provide a hands-on tour of HIA including the tower, the new baggage handling system, etc. These visits can also be an occasion to receive reports from area stakeholders, including local community leaders.

4) Caucus Communication

The senators are interested in keeping informed on aviation industry developments and trends. Staff should develop a basic approach for providing fact sheets, periodic issue briefings, summaries of research findings, etc.



5) PennDOT Bureau of Aviation Interaction

Several senators were pleased to learn that PennDOT has a Bureau of Aviation. While BOA is not positioned to staff the caucus, periodic interactions, presentations, etc., should be considered as an early activity. A PennDOT presentation on the BOA would be a valuable topic for a caucus meeting.



6) Resolutions, Policy Positions, and Legislative Proposals

The ultimate purpose of the caucus is to support various initiatives that bolster aviation in Pennsylvania. It is recognized that this may range from sponsoring resolutions to drafting and sponsoring legislative bills. It could also include framing various policy positions for consideration by the appropriate standing committees.

APPENDIX
Pennsylvania Senate Aviation Caucus Members, 2015 – 2016

David Argall
Room 171, Main Capitol

Ryan Aument
Room 352, Main Capitol

Camera Bartolotta
Room 460, Main Capitol

John Blake
Room 17, East Wing

Lisa Boscola
Room 458, Main Capitol

Jim Brewster
Room 458, Main Capitol

Michele Brooks
Room 459, Main Capitol

Pat Browne
Room 281, Main Capitol

Jake Corman
Room 350, Main Capitol

Jay Costa
Room 535, Main Capitol

John Eichelberger
Room 169, Main Capitol

Mike Folmer
Room 337, Main Capitol

Vincent Hughes
Room 545, Main Capitol

Scott Hutchinson
Room 170, Main Capitol

Thomas McGarrigle
Room 185, Main Capitol

Bob Mensch
Room 16, East Wing

John Rafferty
Room 20, East Wing

John Sabatina
Room 457, Main Capitol

Mario Scavello
Room 168, Main Capitol

Judy Schwank
Room 457, Main Capitol

Patrick Stefano
Room 183, Main Capitol

Scott Wagner
Room 187 Main Capitol

Sean Wiley
Room 185, Main Capitol

John Wozniak
Room 10, East Wing

Gene Yaw
Room 362, Main Capitol

John Yudichak
Room 458, Main Capitol