

THIRTY DAYS FOR CBP ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Client:

Ontario International Airport
Authority

Issue:

Governor Request Letter

Practice Area:

State Government Relations

Outcome:

Client Goal Achieved

Successful Tactics:

Strong Integrated Government
Relations & Advocacy

In November 2016, the Ontario International Airport was transferred from the Los Angeles World Airport Authority (LAWA) to the newly established Ontario International Airport Authority (OIAA). The effort required reapplication for all federal security contracts including the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration and Customs Border Protection (CBP); a rigorous and detailed process. The CBP application required authorization by California Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. The CBP established a June 1, 2017 deadline in order to continue officer presence at Ontario International Airport. Loss of CBP Officer presence would shut down the airport's international operation, diverting 30% of overall flights to LAX. *On May 5, 2017, Capitol Core Group was engaged to obtain Governor Brown's authorization leaving a mere 25-days prior to loss of Ontario Airport's international flight status.*

Transfer of authority in one of the 11 California international airports had not taken place during a recent Governor's term in office, therefore, no procedures existed. In addition, Governor Brown made clear to us early on his concerns with the transfer of Ontario to an inexperienced authority. In his first meeting with Capitol Core he made it abundantly clear he would vet the application process thoroughly without regard to the upcoming deadline. Over the project period, we would work with seven Legislative offices, seven State Agencies/Departments, and the City of Los Angeles to obtain the Governor's authorization.

Capitol Core Group briefed the State Legislative Offices within the Airport's operating area – Assembly Members Rodriguez and Steinorth; Senators Roth, Morrell, and Leyva – to obtain stakeholder support for the Governor's authorization. In addition, we would seek support from U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representative Torres to urge the Governor to provide authorization.

The Governor's staff referred the authorization request to the Office of Business & Economic Development, State Transportation Agency, Office of Special Counsel Eric Holder, and Intergovernmental Relations for review and comment. The Governor's questions ranged from economic impact/development, regulatory authority over the airport to addressing concerns over potential increases in federal "officers" within the State.

The request was further referred to Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti to address concerns over potential competition issues between Ontario and LAX.

By May 22, 2017, Capitol Core Group successfully obtained support letters and direct phone calls to the Governor in support of the authorization from all California and Congressional Legislative Offices.

For each Agency/Department, we briefed the highest levels on the application process and provided them with understanding over the critical nature of losing international airport status. Wil Roth, Chief Deputy Director of GoBiz; Assistant Secretary Carol Farris of CalSTA; Special Council Holder; Dep. Director Michael Martinez and Katie Wheeler were all provided briefings and Capitol Core addressed concerns expressing. We also provided briefing to Mayor Garcetti in order to clear concerns over airport competition.

On June 1, 2017, Capitol Core provided an update to CBP Operations Support in Washington D.C. regarding our efforts and progress. Our efforts received a 15-day extension under the existing LAWA permit. On June 2nd Governor Brown received all final approvals from Agencies and Departments.

On June 5, 2017, we received the signed authorization from Governor Brown allowing for the CBP application to be completed on June 7th. No interruption of international service was experienced by the airport and Capitol Core mitigated the Governor's concerns enough to allow him to sign the application's authorization. Our knowledge, a persistent government relations strategy, decision-maker level briefings allowed for a successful 30-day vetting process and met OIAA's goals.