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Flint Bishop Airport Director, Nino Sapone's, Full Statement on the DOT's Approval of Delta Airlines' Request for Exemption

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(Flint, Michigan) Airport Director, Nino Sapone: "I hope everyone is safe and well. Thank you for be a part of this today.

We wanted to let you know that we were informed by the Department of Transportation that they have approved Delta Air Lines' request for an exemption for flying from Flint Bishop Airport, and the airline has their permission to suspend service to Flint for the duration of the CARES Act and still receive their governmental support. Their last day of flights before the suspension will be July 7, 2020. Passengers with travel beyond those dates can contact Delta Air Lines Reservations at 1-800-221-1212, and they will quickly get you re-accommodated.

The CARES Act would have guaranteed us that Delta, and all of our airlines, would have continued to fly from our airport until at least September 30th of this year. As you know, we chose not to contest Delta's initial request for this exemption. During these incredibly difficult times, we understood that it was more important to be a good partner to Delta, and think of our airport and community's long-term relationship with them, than it was to try to force them to fly from Flint. Delta is a fantastic airline and remains a fantastic partner. They did not delight in this decision.

So, what does this mean going forward? One thing it doesn't mean is that the airline is gone forever. This is a **suspension in service**, and **not necessarily** a market exit. The team at Delta headquarters has assured us that they will continue to monitor the demand in Flint, and that they will reevaluate their position as we head into the fall. Could we see service again before September 30th? Yes. Could we have a delay beyond that? Yes. Is there a guarantee of them returning? No. However, the demand for Delta service here has always been, and will remain high. We know that there are tens of thousands of you who depend on their flights to get you where you need to go, and to bring business clients, family and friends to you. The sheer volume of Delta Sky Miles Passengers in our region speaks to that.

What can you do to support us? Continue to fly on our remaining carriers as you are ready and able. Keep us informed as your businesses ramp up again and your demand for business and personal travel increases. These are some of the key indicators that give airlines confidence that their airplanes will have the passengers on board that they need to be successful.

We are in unprecedented times, and we are all working together to navigate these unusual waters.

In the meantime, all of our airlines are continuing to fly, *including Delta whose last day before the suspension is July 7th*. Allegiant, American and United are all flying from Flint every day and will continue to do so. None of those three requested a service exemption for Flint. So, fly them when you can.

The safety of our mutual passengers is the most important thing to them, and to us. All of our airlines have taken a lot of additional measures to keep everyone safe, from things like cleanliness to social distancing, special boarding process and much more. Your individual airlines' websites will have all of their latest procedures listed.

At Flint Bishop, we have done the same. Everyone...employees, vendors and passengers, have their temperatures taken before entering the building, our sanitation measures have been increased across the board. You can find a full list of our procedures on our website: Bishop Airport dot org. Your safety is our number one priority.

We are already seeing our traffic picking back up again. We still have a long way to go, but we are on our way. This region has always supported our airport. Every person who flies from Flint Bishop helps to make it a success. Thank you for that. We are in this together, and when you're ready to fly, we are here."

Flint Bishop International Airport (FNT) is "Not the only way to fly. Just a better one". Flint guarantees you all of the destination options of a larger airport, while flying from the comfort of a relaxing and beautiful facility. Flint features all-jet service, with flights provided by Allegiant, American, Delta (service will be temporarily suspended starting July 8, 2020). Our airlines provide many nonstop flights to popular destinations across the country that will also connect you around the world, usually in one stop or less. For reservations and flight information from Flint, visit our website at bishopairport.org

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