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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Tampa International Airport Plans for its Future Board of Directors to Consider Airline Incentive Program**

TAMPA, FL (June 15, 2011) - - Working with two of Tampa International Airport's core beliefs – increasing the Airport's presence to create a positive impact on the region and making the Airport more competitive in a very competitive business, the Airport's board of directors will meet Monday, June 20, 2011 to create and vote on a policy to implement the Airport's first Airline Incentive Program. Depending upon the level of service, an airline may qualify for waived Airport charges and marketing dollars to support new service. Any program that the Airport proposes will be completely cost neutral for incumbent carriers with all incentives paid from the Airport's discretionary capital and reserve funds.

"Convincing an airline to launch service to your community is an enormous challenge – it is the second hardest part of Air Service Development. Number one, ensuring the success of that new service, is even harder, and it requires the support of the entire community," stated Joe Lopano, CEO, Tampa International Airport.

"Having the right flight connections to domestic and international destinations is an important factor in company relocation and expansion decisions," explained Stuart L. Rogel, President & CEO, Tampa Bay Partnership. "Our Foreign Direct Investment Study has identified the airport and easy access to markets as major factors in the decision for foreign-owned firms to locate operations and headquarters in Tampa Bay. Airport incentives for new service will help expand that global access."

According to air service consultant SH&E, a new international European flight could bring an additional \$154 million worth of economic impact and create over 1,200 jobs in the Tampa Bay community.

"Improving the Tampa Bay economy is the bottom line," stated Keith A. Norden, President & CEO, Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation. "The Airport stepping up as a leader to implement a strategic airline incentive program for new service benefits us all."

Airports Council International-North America which represents local, regional and state governing bodies that own and operate commercial airports in the United States and Canada has supported multiple airport programs stating, "ACI-NA believes that air service incentive programs play an important role in ensuring that commercial airports are able to attract domestic and international air service for their communities, and thus promote the development of a robust national air transportation system in which air travelers can find service options to travel throughout the United States, and indeed, throughout the world."

"I would like to encourage the Airport's board of directors to create an airline incentive program," stated Robert J. Rohrlack Jr., President & CEO, Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. "In today's competitive market, the community cannot sit back and watch other cities prosper while we rest on our laurels. We have to be competitive too."

According to airline and airport consultant Seabury APG, Air Service Incentive Programs are routinely used by airports to mitigate airline start-up risk and expenses. Not having an incentive program has placed Tampa International Airport at a competitive disadvantage.

"Tourism is a major economic driver for the Tampa Bay area, generating \$3 billion in revenue during 2010," stated Paul Catoe, President & CEO, Tampa Bay & Company. "It is only fitting that our world-class Tampa International Airport has established an airline incentive program to help us compete for the next new airline route."

D.T. Minich, Executive Director, Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater, recently requested \$250,000 from the Pinellas Tourism Council for promoting new airline service in its upcoming fiscal year budget. Funds will be shared with local airports including Tampa International Airport.

Tampa International Airport carried 16.9 million total passengers in 2010 compared to 19.1 million total passengers during peak year 2007. Currently, TPA provides nonstop service to 68 destinations – seven international and 61 domestic.

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**Joseph W. Lopano**, *Chief Executive Officer*