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

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