



**Testimony  
Global Gateway Alliance Executive Director Stephen Sigmund  
In Support of Resolution 1954**

My name is Stephen Sigmund and I am the Executive Director of the Global Gateway Alliance. GGA is a business, labor, academia and government coalition whose mission is to advocate for modernization of NYC area airports and related infrastructure.

Our Board is made up of New York and New Jersey leaders like our founder Joe Sitt of Thor Equities, Association for a Better New York and the Teamsters which are represented today, the Partnership for New York City, Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union and the New York Hotel Trades Council, NYU Rudin Transportation Center, TD Bank and many others.

We are here today in full support of Resolution 1954.

Earlier this year, GGA conducted a survey showing 15 out of the 20 busiest US airports provide free Wi-Fi. That list includes major hubs, and major competitor cities, like Boston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

In fact, our airports comprise 3 of the 5 that don't have free Wi-Fi (Miami and Chicago)

The 2012 Travel and Leisure study which ranked New York area airports the worst in the country specifically cited our lack of free Wi-Fi and the difficulty in even finding a Wi-Fi signal at all after paying for it.

Just as important, free Wi-Fi has become an expected convenience, and quality of life improvement, throughout NYC Public Places. As of 2012, in NYC, free public Wi-Fi is available in 20 parks, 5 subway stations, public libraries and museums throughout the City, 20 public pay phones, and countless restaurants, coffee shops, and other locations.

As you can see on the chart behind me, there is free Wi-Fi essentially everywhere in our region – except our airports.

With our airports the most delayed in the country and so much extra time needed for security, passengers need their mobile lives to extend to the airports. In particular, business travelers rely on good mobile connections wherever they are on the road. A full 70% of passengers carry smart phones, and 90% of airline passengers would give up at least one other onboard convenience for a Wi-Fi connection.

GGA supports Council Member Brewer's resolution whole heartedly, and we urge its passage in the full Council. We join in calling on Boingo to amend its contract with the Port Authority, which is archaic by Internet standards, and allow passengers free Wi-Fi.

NYC airports should be leading the country, not so far behind every other airport and public space in the country.

Thank you.



**TESTIMONY FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK  
REGARDING INTERNET ACCESS AT AIRPORTS BEFORE THE NYC COUNCIL  
JOINT COMMITTEES ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY  
December 18, 2013**

Good Morning. My name is Jordan Isenstadt and I am the Deputy Director of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY). ABNY is one of New York's longstanding civic organizations advocating for the policies, programs and projects that make New York a better place to live, work and visit. We represent the broad fabric of New York's economy, and our membership includes New York's most influential businesses, non-profits, arts & culture organization, educational institutions, labor unions and entrepreneurs. We remain firmly dedicated to the constant growth and renewal of New York City's people, businesses and communities.

I am here this morning to offer ABNY's support of Resolution 1954, which calls upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to amend its contract with Boingo Wireless, in order to provide free Internet access at its three major airports. Thank you Councilmember Brewer for introducing this resolution that is vital for business travelers and the City as a whole.

For millions of business travelers, airports are an extension of their office. In fact, 55% of all business travelers carry three to four smart devices at all times. Access to free and reliable Wi-Fi at airports is just another part of keeping business running smoothly and efficiently, especially given the increase in time spent at the airport due to long lines at security checkpoints and frequent delays.

A vast majority of global airports say they now offer travelers free Wi-Fi, but the New York City airports, with its 110 million passengers, and JFK having the most international arrivals, are still without free Wi-Fi, which seems incomprehensible. Airports account for \$63B in regional economic activity and nearly half a million jobs in the New York City area alone. It simply makes no sense that our airports do not have the expected convenience of public Wi-Fi.

This is not a situation where we need to "reinvent the wheel", as countless airports around the world have instituted free Wi-Fi offerings and now the Port Authority needs to do the same. This resolution will make a difference to thousands of travelers each day. We thank the New York City Council Subcommittee on Government Operations and Technology for considering this important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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# **JOINT COUNCIL No.16**

## **INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS**



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NYC Council: Committee on Technology  
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### ***Resolution 1954 to provide free WiFi at NYC airports***

Hello, my name is Rebecca Lynch and I am here on behalf of Teamsters Joint Council 16 representing 120,000 working men and women in the Greater New York area. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before your committee on this resolution that will be beneficial to New Yorkers and the millions of visitors New York City receives annually.

As a board member of the Global Gateway Alliance, the Teamsters recognize the importance of world-class airports. As a union that represents pilots, mechanics, cleaners and truckers in the nation's airports, we recognize the importance of world-class airports for the great number of jobs they create.

The Global Gateway Alliance study with the Partnership for New York City found that almost half a million jobs are created by our airports. Better amenities and options, such as the proposed wireless internet access, at our airports will lead to more amiable travel for New York's airport patrons and that in turn translates to increased business which leads to increased hiring from our communities and increased revenue for New York City, the air carriers, and the merchants in our airports.

A 2012 airport survey conducted by Travel and Leisure ranked LaGuardia Airport the worst airport in the United States, JFK and Newark Airports didn't fare much better. This is not the reputation we want and it is not what New York City should have. Something as simple as the proposed free Boingo wifi would make a world of difference for travelers in our New York City airports. Boingo has set a precedent, they have been offering a free, advertiser-supported wifi options since 2007. Since its

implementation, the usage has doubled. Wireless internet has a huge impact at airports- in Boston, over 20% of passengers take advantage of free wifi and in San Francisco, over 30%.

These numbers are not small and are constantly growing and our passengers deserve the same level of amenities they have come to expect in parks, subways, coffee shops, and airports around the world.

On behalf of the Teamsters Joint Council 16 and the residents and travelers of New York City, I want to thank you for this resolution and urge Boingo to amend its contract so we can begin planning the future of New York City's airports.