My name is Jonathan Wang. I live here in Purchase and I am also a private pilot who uses the airport. I firmly believe that the airport has been an asset to our community, and I believe that its value can be preserved while minimizing its negative effects. Last November, I learned of County Executive Astorino's plan to privatize the airport and got to work educating myself about the details of that deal. I have since continued to learn about the current process to privatize the airport and the county's airport master plan, and I have concluded that both will lead to an increase in flights that will have harmful effects on our community. In particular, expansion will bring more noise, more traffic, and an increased risk of pollution to the Kensico Reservoir, which is where most of the county, including all of Harrison, and 90% of New York City get our drinking water from. While expansion will hurt our community the most, everyone in the metro area should be concerned about threats to the Kensico.

Privatization would fundamentally change the relationship between the county and the airport to give the county a powerful reason to not only allow but advocate for expansion. Today, the airport's profits stay at the airport for use on everything from repairs to security and environmental protection. Growth of the airport doesn't benefit the county's budget. The current management company doesn't benefit either, because it gets paid a fixed fee. With privatization, the winning bidder would get all of the airport profits. The county would then be paid a cut of those profits to spend on whatever it likes. But this would also give the county a **direct financial incentive** to pull **as much money** out of the airport as possible. Expansion would be one way to increase profits. Cutting costs on things like security or environmental protections would be another. And not only would the county be incentivized to increase profits, but the private operator would be as well. It isn't hard to imagine that the money will prove too tempting to resist, and we will all be worse off for it.

While privatization provides the why for expansion, the county's airport master plan describes how it will occur. This plan, released three weeks ago first to companies bidding to privatize the airport and only then to the public, predicts a dramatic expansion in traffic at the airport and recommends hundreds of millions of dollars in public spending to ease this expansion.

Thirty years ago, the county reached a compromise with the airlines to cap the number of flights and passengers per half hour at the airport. This compromise is now county law, and the intent was to keep the airport a good neighbor and to preserve the character of our community. But the master plan

ignores this cap to predict a **68% increase** in airline flights at the airport. To cater to this expansion, the plan suggests adding two gates to the terminal, adding two new parking garages to triple capacity, and increasing overnight parking for airliners by 50%. The overnight parking is especially galling because the only reason airlines park planes overnight is to allow them to depart early in the morning.

To make matters worse, the master plan also calls for $153 million in public funds to build and renovate facilities for corporate jets. This is important because private flights lead to most of the airport's revenue today. These flights make up 85-90% of all flights and there are no restrictions on their number. Even if the existing cap on airline flights remains county law, private flights would still be free to expand without bounds. Under privatization, the incentives would be in place to aggressively market our airport to attract private traffic from other nearby airports like Teterboro in NJ. Certainly, the master plan envisions taxpayers paying for construction to make our airport more attractive to these flights.

Aircraft noise, air pollution, and traffic caused by expansion will harm our community. But expansion's threat to the Kensico Reservoir should concern our entire region. The airport was originally built next to the water supply for over 9 million people, a situation that would never be allowed today. Some storm water from the airport still drains into the Kensico, and the county has programs to minimize and monitor this surface water. The airport used to have a program to test groundwater on and around the airport. That program was ended after Rob Astorino was elected in 2010 despite the last publicly available report from June 2009 showing volatile organic compounds and heavy metals, including lead, above state guidelines in the soil.

Supporters of privatization argue that a private operator will be required to maintain environmental protections at the airport. The county has indeed required that the airport maintain its ISO 14001 certification. However, that is a process standard and not a target standard – that is to say, it specifies a way to keep track of environmental targets and whether you are meeting them, but it is silent on what those targets should be. The targets the airport describes publicly today are vague – things like "monitor former Texaco hangar" or "reduce the potential impact of aircraft deicing." The county has not mandated any particular environmental targets that the privatizer must meet.

Indeed, the county has required bidders to maintain only a minimal amount of insurance in case of pollution. It seems obvious that only 5 or 10 million dollars is not enough to clean up any significant spill into the Kensico. Peter Schlactus, the new chair of the Rye Brook Airport Advisory Council, runs an insurance brokerage, and he agrees that the required insurance coverage is "thin." This means that cleaning up any pollution would fall on us, and this could well be financially ruinous for the county. Because it is currently clean enough, water from the Kensico is not filtered before it is disinfected and delivered to taps. If filtration were required, the county could be on the hook for billions of dollars, far more than it stands to make from privatization. For example, the Croton watershed, which supplies 10% of New York City's water, was contaminated by runoff from increased development. This forced the city to build a filtration plant for that supply which cost over $3 billion. A similar plant for the Kensico, which supplies 9 times the amount of water, would cost tens of billions of dollars, a thousand times more than what we might make from privatization or what insurance might pay.

Finally, privatization could decrease the transparency and accountability of the airport to our community. I learned much of what I've presented today by reading through county reports and making Freedom of Information requests. And today, contracts at the airport are public records and are approved by the county legislature. It doesn't appear that a private operator would be required to maintain this level of transparency or accountability. Indeed, the county has denied all of my requests for data relating to the current privatization process, including the draft lease dictating its terms. They say that doing so could lead to worse bids. If the county signs away its rights to oversee the airport for 30-40 years, it could well also sign away the public's ability to determine what is going on right in our backyards.

In short, the county's plans for the airport are alarming. Privatization would create a powerful incentive for expansion with minimal oversight. The county has already drafted a plan for this expansion, which runs counter to the past 30 years of policy. Not only would we be subject to the increased annoyance of noise and traffic that would change the character of our communities, but the quality of our drinking water would likely be threatened. This is why I believe it is critical that we oppose the privatization and expansion of the airport, and that we urge our elected officials to do the same.