



**GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA  
DISTRICT 1 BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR**

February 6, 2025

The Honorable Rebecca Tepper, Secretary  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs  
Attn: MEPA Analyst, EEA  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

**Re: Comments on Boston Logan International Airport 2023/2024 Environmental Data Report (EEA #3247)**

Dear Secretary Tepper and Director Kim,

I write on behalf of the residents of East Boston regarding the Boston Logan International Airport 2023/2024 Environmental Data Report (EDR). I appreciate the opportunity to comment and acknowledge the work undertaken to document airport operations, mitigation measures, and environmental trends. However, as the EDR itself makes clear, Logan International Airport has surpassed pre-pandemic passenger levels and continues to exert significant cumulative environmental and public-health impacts on surrounding communities. These impacts fall disproportionately on East Boston, a designated Environmental Justice community.

The EDR confirms that passenger activity and aircraft operations increased in both 2023 and 2024, with 2024 passenger volumes exceeding pre-pandemic levels. This milestone signals that Logan is no longer operating in a recovery period. As such, future planning, permitting, and project review must treat current and proposed activity as new or expanded impacts rather than a continuation of historic conditions. Continued growth without enforceable limits or commensurate reductions in pollution, noise, and traffic is incompatible with the Commonwealth's environmental justice, climate, and public-health goals.

While the EDR appropriately frames itself as a tool for evaluating cumulative environmental effects, the mitigation strategies described remain largely incremental and forecast-based. East Boston residents continue to experience elevated exposure to air pollution, chronic noise,

roadway congestion, and associated health risks, even as airport activity grows. Mitigation measures that merely keep pace with growth are insufficient; mitigation must outperform growth to deliver real, measurable improvements in community health outcomes.

The report highlights steps taken by Massport to reduce emissions, including electrification of ground service equipment, expansion of electric vehicle infrastructure, and promotion of high-occupancy vehicle use and transit. These efforts are important but must be evaluated against actual passenger volumes, aircraft operations, and vehicle trips. Forecast-based modeling has contributed to a longstanding mitigation lag, and it is critical that MEPA oversight requires mitigation tied to real-world activity levels and monitored outcomes.

Noise impacts remain another persistent burden for East Boston residents. While the restart of the Residential Sound Insulation Program is welcome, sound insulation is a reactive measure that does not address the source of the harm. Operational controls, runway use reforms, and meaningful limits on nighttime flights must be considered alongside insulation programs to prevent the creation of new noise impacts.

Ground transportation continues to be a major driver of environmental impact. Logan-related vehicle traffic contributes significantly to local air pollution and congestion, particularly in East Boston due to its proximity to terminals and airport roadways. Any airport growth that increases vehicle trips compounds existing inequities unless paired with enforceable reductions in single-occupancy vehicle use and stronger regional transportation demand management strategies.

Finally, environmental justice requires binding commitments, clear thresholds that trigger project modification or denial, and measurable reductions in pollution and noise in affected communities. East Boston residents must be engaged not merely as consultees, but as partners in decision-making that directly affects their health and quality of life. I respectfully urge the EEA and the MEPA Office to use the findings of the 2023/2024 EDR to strengthen oversight of Logan Airport by:

- Requiring that cumulative impacts drive decision-making and limit further expansion;
- Mandating impact-based mitigation tied to actual passenger and operations data;
- Establishing EJ-specific thresholds and enforceable protections for surrounding communities; and
- Ensuring that mitigation strategies result in net reductions in pollution, noise, and traffic burdens for East Boston.

Logan's role as a regional transportation hub does not override the Commonwealth's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and quality of life of our communities. Choosing restraint, accountability, and enforceable mitigation is both necessary and consistent with Massachusetts' climate and equity commitments. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to continued engagement on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gabriela Coletta Zapata". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light gray rectangular background.

Gabriela Coletta Zapata  
Boston City Councilor, District 1

CC:

The Honorable Mayor Michelle Wu

The Honorable Lydia Edwards, State Senator

The Honorable Adrian Madaro, State Representative

Brian Swett, Chief Climate Officer, City of Boston

Oliver Sellers-Garcia, Green New Deal Director & Environment Commissioner, City of Boston