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Executive Ficano names community leaders to Airport Authority Board

Wayne County – Wayne County Executive Robert A. Ficano has appointed two respected community leaders to the Wayne County Airport Authority Board.

Samuel A. Nouhan and Renee C. Pipis will both serve six-year terms beginning January 2009.

“Our County’s airports are among our greatest assets and greatest opportunities for business growth,” said Executive Ficano. “These new board members will help to execute the regional vision for the Aetrotropolis as the economic engine that will power our economy into the future. They understand the challenges facing the airlines that serve our airports and are committed to collaborating with them to ensure that our airports continue to be respected around the world.”

The Authority is responsible for the management and operation of Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport and Willow Run Airport. Both are managed by an independent, seven-member Board of Directors. Under state law, the Wayne County Executive appoints four of the Board’s members.

"Samuel Nouhan and Renee Pipis each posses an accomplished record of building successful public-private partnerships, and we welcome their experienced leadership to the Airport Authority board," said Wayne County Airport Authority CEO Lester Robinson. "The Authority staff looks forward to their support and independent oversight as we continue to maintain two of the world's best-run air transportation facilities."

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Samuel A. Nouhan from Grosse Pointe is a partner in the national law firm of Bowman and Brooke LLP's Detroit office. His practice areas include product liability, commercial and municipal litigation. He previously served in the office of the Wayne County Corporation Counsel and as a clerk to two federal judges. Nouhan is a graduate of the University of Detroit-Mercy School of Law and previously served on the Grosse Pointe Park City Council.

"Having succeeded in both the public and private sectors, Samuel Nouhan understands public finance and appreciates the fiercely competitive market environment in which corporations operate," said Harry J. Pearce, former vice chairman and director of General Motors Corporation. "The Airport Board will benefit from this breadth of experience he brings to the table."

Renee C. Pipis from Detroit is the President of RCP Associates LLC, a business development and government relations consulting firm in Detroit. She also serves on the Board of Directors for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. Pipis holds a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree from Wayne State University.

"I have known Renee for many years and have confidence that she will serve the citizens well in making sure our airports perform as two of the best in the world," said John Dingell, U.S. Representative, 15th District. "She has the ability to identify opportunities via collaborative efforts with government and non-government entities."

Pipis is also known in the business community. "Renee has been a strong advocate for Michigan owned businesses," said Daniel J. Loepf, President and CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. "And she understands the need to focus on green technology. She will be an asset to this authority."

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