



**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
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January 13, 2011

**Keith W. Stokes**  
*Executive Director*

Frank Lennon  
President  
Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame/USS John F. Kennedy Project  
PO Box 28701  
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Mr. Lennon:

I write specific to your efforts to bring the retired aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy to Portsmouth, Rhode Island. The possibility of adding a new world class visitor attraction to Narragansett Bay would be a welcome addition to one of our state's key economic development areas.

I share your enthusiasm for using the USS Kennedy as the centerpiece to develop a truly unique tourism destination. Based on your vision, the USS Kennedy could provide a valuable local and regional asset that could generate tangible economic, cultural and educational benefits.

The USS Kennedy would complement the ongoing efforts of the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation to further expand marine trades in the Melville area of Portsmouth, promote the state as a center of our nation's defense industry and bolster tourism revenue.

Given the Kennedy family's close ties to Rhode Island, including the President's wartime training at Melville, his marriage in Newport and the Summer White House years at Hammersmith Farm, locating this namesake here would be a fitting tribute to his legacy. The USS Kennedy would also be a natural part of the rich fabric of naval and aviation history in the Ocean State, that includes Fort Adams, the U.S. Naval War College, Naval Station Newport and the Quonset Air Museum.

Again, the USS John F. Kennedy, as a world class tourism destination, could provide long-term benefits to Rhode Island residents. On behalf of the state's official economic development agency, I can only hope that your efforts to bring the USS Kennedy to permanent berth in Portsmouth are successful.

Sincerely,

Keith W. Stokes  
Executive Director  
RI Economic Development Corporation