



Is the Fate of Kansas City's Airport Terminal In Its Star?

Published on *Show-Me Institute* (<https://showmeinstitute.org>)



By: *Patrick Tuohey*

On October 8, [The Kansas City Star](#) editorial board urged readers to vote for a new airport terminal in the November 7 election. It wrote:

To us, one of the main selling points of the proposed new terminal is the expectation that airlines would add more direct flights out of here, and maybe even some international flights.

Two days later, [Star reporter Steve Vockrodt authored a piece](#) that made clear there was no guarantee of new flights should voters approve a new terminal. Vockrodt clarified:

A new terminal, by itself, won't lead to more direct flights to more destinations.

"That's probably fair," said Steve Sisneros, senior director of airport affairs for Southwest Airlines, the dominant airline flying in and out of KCI.

The editorial board did eventually correct their error, stating on October 15 that, "There are no guarantees that more flights will be added by the airlines if voters agree to construct a new single terminal." The next day, [Vockrodt caught pro-terminal mailers making the same mistake](#).

In that October 15, the *Star* editorial board [again endorsed a new terminal vote](#), but seems to have made a second error, stating that, "if nothing is done, the number of flights out of KCI will continue to dwindle."

Dwindle? According to the [Aviation Department's own statistics](#) , enplaned passengers (those boarding an airplane) are up 4.5% over last year. Likewise, air carrier operations showed an increase in flights of 5%. Southwest Airlines—the biggest carrier at MCI—saw an increase of enplaned passengers of 5.6% over last year. Passengers and flights are increasing, not dwindling.

Two emails obtained by the Show-Me Institute (see links at the bottom of this post) and sent by Mark Nevins of the Dover Strategy Group—the company running the yes vote campaign on the airport—indicate that members of the *Star* editorial board are apparently committed to supporting the effort with regular editorials. In an October 8 email, Nevins links to a supportive op-ed and writes that single-terminal backers “can expect to see more of these kinds of generally supportive editorials in the weeks ahead.” Then in an October 15 email Nevins reiterates that the *Star* “will continue to publish editorials supportive [sic] Question 1 on a regular basis through Nov 7.” I hope the editorial board is not simply working as a mouthpiece for the yes campaign. Of course, that could explain why the latter’s misleading claim about increasing the number of direct flights also appeared in a *Star* editorial. It might also explain why the *Star* is running editorials pushing the new terminal regularly—so as to make them more a part of the campaign than an expression of editorial board views.

This same editorial board has decried the airport bidding process as “[marked by distrust, misinformation, unnecessary secrecy and conflict](#) .” It would be a shame to learn that in its zeal to promote a single terminal, the *Star* editorial board has contributed to the very atmosphere of distrust that it decries by helping spread misinformation about the airport.

 [Nevins email oct 8.doc](#)  [Nevins email oct 15.doc](#)

Tags:

- [KCI](#)

About the Author



*Patrick Tuohey
Director of Municipal Policy*

Patrick Tuohey is the Director of Municipal Policy at the Show-Me Institute.

Read Online

<https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/transportation/fate-kansas-city%E2%80%99s-airport-terminal-its-star>

Links

- [1] <https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/transportation/fate-kansas-city%E2%80%99s-airport-terminal-its-star>
- [2] <http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article177540616.html>
- [3] <http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article178121881.html>
- [4] <http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article179156036.html>
- [5] <http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article178809736.html>
- [6] <http://www.flykci.com/media/1673/stats-2017-september.pdf>
- [7] <http://www.kansascity.com/opinion/editorials/article174709911.html>
- [8] <https://showmeinstitute.org/sites/default/files/Nevins%20email%20oct%208.doc>
- [9] <https://showmeinstitute.org/sites/default/files/Nevins%20email%20oct%2015.doc>
- [10] <https://showmeinstitute.org/tags/kci>

Mission Statement

Advancing liberty with responsibility by promoting market solutions for Missouri public policy.

Show-Me Institute

5297 Washington Place 3645 Troost Avenue
Saint Louis, MO 63108 Kansas City, MO 64109
Phone: (314) 454-0647 Phone: (816) 287-0370
Fax: (314) 454-0667

Email: info@showmeinstitute.org

Support Our Work

The Show-Me Institute is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Make your tax deductible contribution today: <http://ShowMeInstitute.org/donate>