

\$1M grant secured for new terminal

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The city of Monroe has secured a \$1 million Federal Aviation Administration grant toward construction of a new terminal at Monroe Regional Airport.

Fifth U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, who requested the grant, said he expects more funding to follow.

"Northeastern Louisiana's economic engine depends on that airport," said Alexander, R-Quitman, who also secured a \$400,000 appropriation for the \$35 million project last year. "It's too important a project not to get done."

Monroe Mayor Jamie Mayo called the

airport the city's top priority among federal projects.

"It is outstanding news to learn that this project has been awarded a \$1 million grant from the Federal Aviation Administration," Mayo said. "This is our link to the rest of the country and the world."

Mayo is among a 10-person contingent in Washington this week as part of the Monroe Chamber of Commerce's summer lobbying trip.

Chamber President Sue Nicholson said the airport is among the region's most valuable assets.

"It's used daily by the business community, as well as the leisure traveler," Nicholson said. "Not only will the new

terminal make travel more efficient, but it will also project a much better image of our community. Our airport is often our community's first impression."

The city now has secured about \$2.4 million in federal funding with another \$8 million in bonding capability through an airport passenger facility charge.

"Enhancing and strengthening Monroe Regional Airport in order to achieve the full economic benefits this airport can bring to the region is a goal we have shared and worked toward together for some time," Alexander said. "And this funding will help provide the means to begin the much-anticipated process of building a new terminal."