Edwards vows new airport won’t hurt BR

Gov. Edwin Edwards said Monday that state plans to build a major international airport in south Louisiana should not affect decisions involving Baton Rouge Metro Airport.

Edwards said he was not endorsing the idea of expanding the Baton Rouge airport.

"I’m not passing judgment on that," Edwards said. "I’m saying that whatever needs are viewed for the Baton Rouge airport by the powers-that-be should be done without regard to this facility because I don’t think it’s going to be, from the standpoint of timing or from the standpoint of facilities, the kind of competition that should inhibit in one way or the other the Baton Rouge facility."

Federal Aviation Administration officials will not support expansions in Baton Rouge if they feel they would be needless in light of the planned international airport, the governor said.

"Baton Rouge does not offer what you might call long-range transportation," Edwards said. "No one goes to Baton Rouge to take a plane to Germany or to South America. You go from there (Baton Rouge) to New Orleans, or there to Atlanta, or there to Miami."

"Hopefully, when this facility is completed, people in this area going to those foreign, distant areas will be able to go to New Orleans and get on a direct, nonstop flight from that port to their port of destination."

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