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Forget the politics, regional towns need airport access: Oakeshott

ACCORDING to one politician the major political parties must reject Sydney Airport's proposition to restrict access for regional airlines.

Lyne MP Rob Oakeshott said he fully supported Rex Airlines' criticism of the proposal put forward by Sydney Airport chairman Max Moore-Wilton last week.

Mr Moore-Wilton said there would be no need for a second airport if Sydney Airport did not have to accommodate regional airline flights.

"Earlier this year, the federal government confirmed access to Sydney's airport for regional air services was protected by legislation," Mr Oakeshott said.

"Mr Moore-Wilton knew this when Sydney Airport Corporation Limited purchased Sydney Airport so it's a bit rich to now say we can make more money, or we don't have to build another airport, if regional airlines go elsewhere.

"The comments are irresponsible, and Labor and the Coalition need to condemn them as such.

"There is bipartisan support for legislation that ensures Australians living and working in regional communities have access to Sydney Airport. Labor and the Coalition must now guarantee that support will continue."

Yesterday, Regional Express (Rex), Australia's largest independent regional airline, labelled Mr Moore-Wilton's position as a "reprehensible money grab by Macquarie Bank", the owner of Sydney Airport Corporation Limited.

Mr Oakeshott said Rex, and other regional airline service providers, had every right to be angry about the comments, which could only be put to bed if the major political parties stood by regional Australia and rejected the remarks.

Only last week Mr Oakeshott welcomed the [five-year extension to the Rex Airlines contract](#) between Taree and Sydney.