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About those airport losses ...

BOEING'S decision to create 75 jobs at Mid-America is great news, but let's not get too carried away.

U.S. Rep. John Shimkus went so far as to say Boeing's presence justifies MidAmerica Airport's existence.

"This is the return on that investment," he told local leaders. "And I salute you for that daring investment you made years ago."

But the airport is running \$5 million a year in annual losses 12 years after it opened. The 75 jobs and the yet-to-be determined rent probably won't balance the books.

MidAmerica also helped keep Scott Air Force Base open, but

that hasn't stemmed the airport's ongoing losses either.

The question remains: How does St. Clair County stop the airport's financial bleeding?

County officials claim they're still focused on cargo flights, but how would that work? They just ended the flower shipments, which were supposed to be the catalyst for developing cargo operations, to turn over the warehouse to Boeing. Are they going to store cargo in the gorgeous, mostly unused passenger terminal?

No, building another warehouse at taxpayer expense on cargo speculation should not be an option.