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The responsibility of collecting the Aircraft Excise Tax was moved from the State to municipalities several years ago because the State realized the costs involved in collecting the fee were excessive in comparison to the revenue generated. Kudos to the State for not simply increasing the tax rate and making Maine a generally less competitive place to base aircraft.

As Airport Manager, I would like Belfast to have the option of charging this tax. That way it is a local decision about whether the revenue generated warrants the staffing time involved in collecting the tax. It also allows the local community to decide whether imposing the additional cost of basing an aircraft at their airport, and potentially putting themselves at a financial disadvantage to a nearby airport, is offset by the desirability of their airport and the amenities they offer.

Making Maine airports an attractive place to base aircraft will generate more revenue with much less administrative overhead through fuel sales, hangar leases, and hangar property taxes. Eliminate the mandated Aircraft Excise Tax which generates little income for most airports and is confusing and cumbersome.