

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
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Secretary Rodney Slater  
Department of Transportation  
Washington, D.C. 20590

*OST-98-3713-17*

Dear Secretary Slater:

I was delighted to learn the Department of Transportation is addressing the problem of larger airlines squeezing out small carriers from hub airports. Northwest Airlines, despite their protestations to the contrary, did just that to Reno Air at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Fares on routes in which Reno no longer competes have gone up.

I resent the bullying tactics some of the large airlines use to force smaller carriers out of airports I use and the resulting need to pay much higher fares.

We fly from MBS Airport, Flint Airport, and Detroit Metropolitan Airport. Because a competing small carrier flies from Flint to Atlanta, fares have been reasonable and attractive. Before the competing carrier began the Atlanta flights, we had to pay nearly \$200 more on a round trip ticket.

I also look forward to hearings on frequent flier miles. I oppose the present practice of expiration dates. My husband is only a few thousand miles from an award. Unless we make an unwanted flight in the next few months, all his miles will be lost because they expire. When you accumulate enough miles for a ticket, exchanging them for an actual seat is a challenge. My experience (and those of friends) shows that it is seldom possible to travel when and where you want. We are essentially at the mercy of the airlines when it comes to being able to use the ticket.

There seems to be little logic to airline pricing. Distance is not a factor. Even route profitability doesn't seem to matter. Prices for seats on the same airplane may vary by several hundreds of dollars. The carriers charge as much as possible.

You have my wholehearted support

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christie A. Powers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christie A. Powers  
1301 Evamar Drive  
Midland, MI 48640