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October 4, 2000

Mr. Dennis J. De Vany
Chief, Essential Air Service Division
Office of Aviation Analysis
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKETS
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Re: Ponce, Puerto Rico Essential Air Service

Dear Mr. De Vany:

As you may know, our firm represents the Government of Puerto Rico on federal and international aviation matters. Puerto Rico involvement in the aviation sphere is generally through the Open Skies Task Force, an interagency group coordinated by the Puerto Rico Department of Economic Development and Commerce.

In response to your September 15 letter about essential air service at Ponce, the Puerto Rico Ports Authority has registered its support for the Cape Air proposal to replace American Eagle as Ponce's EAS carrier. The purpose of this letter is to supplement those comments by expressing the strong interest of the Secretary of Economic Development and Commerce in a smooth operational transition and subsequent service continuation. The Ponce community needs and is statutorily entitled to reliable, uninterrupted air service. When the Department acts in this matter, it should take all possible steps to secure that result.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Russell E. Pommer

cc: Hon. Xavier Romeu
Ms. Alice Velázquez
Mr. César Cintrón