

OST-2002-11451-9

176476



CROWN AMERICAN

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
DOCKETS

Mark E. Pasquerilla  
CHAIRMAN, CEO & PRESIDENT

02 JUN 12 AM 9:44

May 20, 2002

Mr. Dennis Devany, Chief EAS & Domestic  
Analysis Div., Office of Aviation Analysis  
United States Department of Transportation  
400 7<sup>th</sup> St., SW Room 64171  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Devany:

I am writing on behalf of the Johnstown-Cambria County Airport concerning their Essential Air Service. Chautauqua Airlines operating as US Airways Express filed a Notice of Intent to Terminate Service on January 31, 2002 (Docket#OST-2002-11450-1). Chautauqua Airlines has served the Johnstown market since 1996 and began serving the market with a cabin-class product using 30 passenger Saab 340 aircraft in 1999.

The Johnstown community has benefited from having scheduled cabin-class service in the market, which offers a more seamless travel experience than service provided by 19-seat aircraft. The Department of Transportation in managing The Essential Air Service program has some discretion when awarding subsidy to specific airlines. The Johnstown-Cambria County Airport is aware of two US Airways Express carriers that are bidding on the route between Johnstown and Pittsburgh. One of the carriers (Shuttle America) plans to operate three daily departures with 30-passenger cabin class Saab 340 aircraft. Shuttle America has requested an annual subsidy for the Johnstown to Pittsburgh route of \$571,768 for these flights. Colgan Airways plans to offer 3 daily flights with 19-passenger Beech 1900 aircraft with an annual requested subsidy of \$557,053. While the service provided by Shuttle America will be nominally more expensive than Colgan Airways the maximum subsidy difference would only be \$14,715 annually.

The continuation of reliable customer friendly cabin-class air service will allow for continued economic development of our region. The transition to a 19-seat aircraft for scheduled service would place Johnstown in an uncompetitive position when competing for new business and retaining the current level of jobs in our community. We believe the benefit of reliable air service provided with cabin-class equipment far outweighs the additional expense.

I am requesting your help in ensuring that the air service at the Johnstown-Cambria County Airport remain on a cabin-class aircraft. Quality air service is vital for the continued long-term viability of this important community asset.

Thank you for the time and attention that you devote to this extremely important and serious matter.

Yours truly,

Mark Pasquerilla  
Chairman, CEO and President  
Crown American Realty Trust

MEP/dmk