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Correspondence

Docket 2784

JAMES H. DOUGLAS  
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 13, 2003

The Honorable Norman Mineta  
Secretary of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Re: Essential Air Service, Tentative Termination of Subsidy at Rutland  
Docket OST- 1997-2784 -22

Dear Secretary Mineta:

I concur with the City of Rutland's response to your Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs' "Order to Show Cause" why Rutland, Vermont, should not be terminated from the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program. I also concur with the information already provided by Senators Leahy and Jeffords on this subject. I write to support their requests and provide additional comment.

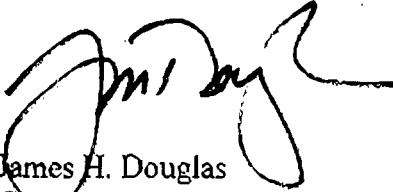
The objections and requests contained in Mayor Cassarino's letter are substantive. There has been a drop in travel and tourism in Vermont following the tragedies of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Rutland has been deeply affected by a loss in discretionary, recreational travel as it is not heavily populated by the size or type businesses that would, on a reoccurring basis, use Rutland's air service and compensate for that loss. However, the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing reports that leading indicators for an increase in tourism in Rutland look very promising.

Economic development and job creation have been the cornerstones of my administration. The State has been striving to develop existing enterprises and attract new business to the state to balance communities like Rutland for long-term stability. Losing air service in Rutland will certainly make that job much more difficult. The EAS Program provides needed access to the national air transportation system and is important not only for the direct economic benefit it provides, but also for those individuals and businesses that would consider locating in Vermont communities, like Rutland, in the future, knowing that the service remains available.

I request that the Department of Transportation provide additional time for other air carriers to offer service proposals for the Rutland airport before suspending the

to make the program more efficient and practical, I hope you will agree that the program should be continued at a minimum funding level for Rutland. Should you wish to discuss this matter in greater detail, please feel free to contact me directly at your convenience.

Sincerely,



James H. Douglas  
Governor

JHD/nl

cc: John P. Cassarino, Mayor, Rutland City  
Patrick J. Leahy, U.S. Senator  
James M. Jeffords, U.S. Senator  
Patricia McDonald, Secretary, Vermont Agency of Transportation  
Thomas Donahue, Executive Director, RRCC  
William McGrath, Executive Director, REDC  
Richard Baker, Chair, RRTC  
Mark Blucher, Executive Director, RRPC  
Kevin Mullin, Vermont State Senator  
Hull Maynard, Vermont State Senator  
David Allaire, Vermont State Representative  
Mike Colgan, Colgan Air Inc.  
Dennis J. Devany, DOT