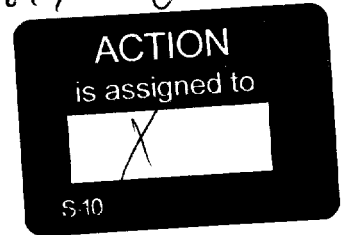


267694
Correspondence

Docket 05T-98-4879-40



January 15, 2004

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
DOCKETS

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary, Department of Transportation
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

2004 FEB -2 P 2:01

Re: Continuation of Alaska Airlines EAS Service into Petersburg, Alaska

Dear Secretary Mineta,

I am writing this letter as a resident of Petersburg and a frequent traveler on Alaska Airlines. I wish to express my strong support that Alaska Airlines is selected to continue to provide essential air service using jet aircraft to serve our community.

Petersburg is an island with no hard-road link access to the mainland. Our two alternatives for ingress and egress to and from our island is either by the Alaska Marine Highway ferry or by aircraft. The problem with the ferry is that it only stops by a couple times a week. Small aircraft are available for short trips but our weather here, simply put, is horrible. Between rain (over 100"/year), fog, snow and almost continuous IFR conditions in the winter, it is essential that Petersburg is served with aircraft that are dependable, reliable and large enough to get us out and back in when we need to travel.

Alaska Airlines serves almost the entire State of Alaska so it is very convenient to get to the major destination cities such as Juneau, Anchorage or even Seattle if the need arises. Transportation is a critical issue for our community. Our hospital is small and emergencies require the transportation of patients to larger cities where specialized medical treatment is available. Alaska Airlines on many occasions has 'dropped' in to a community, unscheduled, to pick up a patient who had to get to advanced medical facilities. I applaud Alaska Airlines and appreciate the Essential Air Service program for making this access available.

One other note – as a parent of two kids who spent their entire grade school and high school traveling to neighboring communities to participate in extra-curricular activities, it was very reassuring to know that they were usually transported on Alaska Airlines. I would have spent restless and sleepless nights if I had to worry about them flying in small aircraft. Again, the weather here can be horrible and a simple plane flight can be a terrifying experience in a small aircraft.

Alaska has done a good job serving us in Petersburg. I believe they will even do better in the future by upgrading their fleet with state of art GPS avionics that will even provide better reliability serving our community. I urge you to select Alaska Airlines as the carrier for continued Essential Air Service into Petersburg.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Carlson".

Dave Carlson

cc. Senator Ted Stevens
Senator Lisa Murkowski
Congressman Don Young