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THE GREATER SITKA  
**chamber**  
OF COMMERCE

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December 18, 2003

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

RE: Continuation of Alaska Airlines EAS Service to Southeast Alaska

Dear Secretary Mineta,

The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the continuation of the Essential Air Service program and Alaska Airlines EAS-supported daily jet service to our neighboring communities of Yakutat, Petersburg and Wrangell, Alaska.

Alaska Airlines' jet service to these communities represents a transportation lifeline to the larger population centers within Alaska and to Seattle, providing the critical movement of substantial volumes of freight and mail in addition to passengers. Lacking a highway system in our region of Alaska, Southeast communities are extremely dependent upon regularly scheduled and reliable air transportation in jet aircraft.

In addition, one of Southeast Alaska's main industries is commercial fishing, which is becoming more and more dependent upon regularly scheduled jet service for getting fresh products to market. This is particularly critical as Alaska strives to compete in the world market.

Alaska Airlines has served our region for over 30 years and we strongly urge you to continue the carrier's EAS agreement for the coming term.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Perkins', written over a horizontal line.

Keith Perkins  
President, Board of Directors  
Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce