

271872

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 27, 2004

DK + OST-02-11450

The Honorable Norman Mineta  
Secretary of Transportation  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, S. W.  
Washington, D. C. 20590

OST-2002-11450-22

2004 MAR -2 P 2:18  
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DOCKETS

Dear Secretary Mineta:

We are once again writing on behalf of the Lancaster Airport Authority's Essential Air Service (EAS) status. Lancaster Airport has been designated an EAS city since the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, however, the community has not had the need to avail itself of subsidized air service for over fifty years.

The events of September 11, 2001, made it impossible for the Airport to maintain subsidy-free air service and due to the fact that they have previously been denied access to the EAS program, air service at Lancaster was discontinued on March 23, 2003.

The Vision 100, Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (P.L.108-176), enacted December 12, 2003, allows Lancaster to request your Department's review of their eligibility status. Such a request was filed electronically by Lancaster on February 26, 2004. It includes the necessary documentation by the Governor of Pennsylvania certifying that the most-commonly used route between Lancaster and Philadelphia is 85.51 miles.

Air service to and from Lancaster is critical to the region, providing over 600 jobs and contributing more than \$38 Million to the local economy. Further, airline tickets purchased from Lancaster County contribute more than \$20 Million dollar per year to the Aviation Trust Fund.

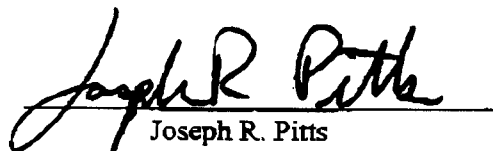
We strongly urge you to find in favor of Lancaster Airport in this matter. It is important to note that granting this request will only find Lancaster eligible through 2007. The airport has assured us that they will continue to dedicate the resources necessary to make airline service successful in the future so that a subsidy will no longer be necessary.

Thank you for your personal attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Arlen Specter  
U.S. Senate



Joseph R. Pitts  
U.S. House of Representatives