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**U.S. Department of  
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary  
of Transportation

400 Seventh St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

June 25, 2004

TO: All U.S. Subsidized Essential Air Service Communities  
(DOCKET OST-2004-18443) - |

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
DOCKETS  
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As you may know, the essential air service (EAS) program currently provides subsidies to air carriers serving 140 communities throughout the country.

In making fiscal year 2004 appropriations, the House Committee on Appropriations accompanied the bill with an Appropriations Report (House Report 108-243) expressing concern over the rising costs of the EAS program. In an effort to improve how communities' air service needs can be met, the Committee directs the Secretary of Transportation to seek views from each community receiving subsidized EAS regarding "how federal, state, and local efforts could cooperate to improve how essential transportation needs can be met, including flexible options of how funds might best be obtained and applied to meet those needs." Subsequently, Congress has asked that we compile this information and submit it in a report, along with the Secretary's recommendations.

Comments should be titled "EAS Community Participation, Docket OST-2004-18443". Please mail an original and one copy to the following address:

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Dockets Operations and Media Management  
400 7<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Rm. PL-401  
Washington, DC 20590

Comments can also be filed electronically online at <http://dmses.dot.gov/submit/>. All documents filed in the docket will be available to the public and can be viewed by entering the docket number online at <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm>. After we receive all of the comments, we will compile them in a report to Congress along with the Secretary's recommendations.

Thank you in advance for your participation and we look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact G. Renée Williams of my staff on (202) 366-1058.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. DeVany, Chief  
EAS & Domestic Aviation, X-53  
Office of Aviation Analysis