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Letter No. 04-132



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
AND CITY COUNCIL

July 26, 2004

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U.S. Department of Transportation
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400 7th Street, S.W.
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Washington, DC 20590

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Dear Sir or Madam:

In response to your request for input from communities receiving essential air service (EAS) funds, in our opinion these funds are extremely valuable in making sure smaller communities, such as Cape Girardeau, Missouri, are able to retain scheduled air passenger service. Attracting the airline industry to serve smaller communities has become increasingly more difficult due to the high cost of providing such service. The EAS program has allowed Cape Girardeau the ability to acquire and maintain air passenger service without the threat of losing our airline service due to operational losses. Rather, the EAS program allows the airlines to operate and still maintain a reasonable profit level.

Any business today depends highly on good, reliable air transportation. Without some level of scheduled air passenger service, the City of Cape Girardeau's industrial recruitment capabilities would most certainly experience difficulties, and our overall economic development would suffer. The Essential Air Service program assists our community by ensuring that we maintain air service as a vital element for healthy economic growth.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment regarding the Essential Air Service program. I have also attached a letter written by Mr. Doug Caldwell, President of Corporate Airlines, who echoes similar feelings regarding this valuable program.

Sincerely,

Jay B. Knudtson
Mayor

JBK:gc

Enclosure