



June 27, 2006

Mr. Dennis DeVany  
Chief, EAS & Domestic Analysis Division, X-53  
Office of Aviation Analysis, Room 6401  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
400 Seventh Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: DOT 2006-6-10, Docket OST-1998-3521  
Invitation From Castle Airport to All Essential Air Service (EAS) Eligible Airlines

Dear Mr. DeVany:

Please post this invitation to the docket.

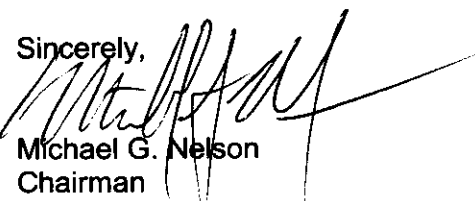
To all EAS Eligible Airlines:

In developing your proposal options to serve the "Merced Community", please accept the County of Merced's invitation to look at and consider Castle Airport (MER). Following an exhaustive review of the appropriate Federal documents and a thorough discussion with Mr. DeVany, it is clear that Castle Airport is an Essential Air Service – "eligible place." Although Castle Airport is new to airline operations, we believe the Merced Community and proposing airline will be better served by conducting operations at Castle.

Castle Airport has a main runway of 11,800 feet with 1,000 foot stopways, no encroachment at either end and no noise issues. The tower will be reactivated in September 2006. A new passenger terminal will be ready for use in December 2006 with a suitable interim terminal available while the new facility is being constructed. There are large hangars available for maintenance and plenty of expansion capability. Convenient parking is available near the terminal. Castle is just 1.2 miles from Highway 99 (a main state highway) and about 6 miles from downtown Merced.

The County of Merced will fully support your consideration of Castle Airport as either one of, or your sole proposal submission option to DOT for the EAS subsidy.

For additional information regarding Castle Airport, please contact our Airport Manager Scott Malta at (209) 385-7686.

Sincerely,  
  
Michael G. Nelson  
Chairman

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