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DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DOCKETS  
2006 AUG 1 4 13  
OST-1998-3521-63

August 1, 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  
Selection of Air Carrier(s) for the Merced Community

Dear Mr. DeVany:

Merced County is pleased to submit this response to assist DOT in selecting the air carrier to serve our community of Merced through the award of the essential air service subsidy.

After careful consideration we recommend DOT select either the Mesa Airline proposal (preferably Option 1) or the Great Lakes Airline proposal with service to Castle Airport. Mesa's proposal seems a bit stronger, but we recognize both airlines would fit the immediate passenger demand in Merced and both are considering further expansion to include larger aircraft.

The Board of Supervisors of Merced County looks forward to partnering with either of these air carriers to serve the air travel needs of the Merced Community through our exceptional commitment to the success of either airline now, and in the future, at our vastly superior Castle Airport.

The County of Merced appreciates the opportunity to comment on the EAS selection. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at (209) 385-7366 or Scott Malta, Castle Airport Manager at (209) 385-7686.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Nelson  
Chairman

**Board of Supervisors**

John Pedrozo  
Supervisor, District C

Kathleen M. Crookha  
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