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July 16, 2007

ROBERT M. BALL, A.A.E.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DAVID M. OWEN
PORT AUTHORITY ATTORNEY

The Honorable Mary E. Peters
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

OST-2007-28644-25

Dear Madam Secretary:

BOARD OF
PORT COMMISSIONERS

A. BRIAN BIGELOW

TAMMY HALL

BOB JANES

RAY JUDAH

FRANK MANN

International air services and access to global markets are very important to southwest Florida, as we are one of the fastest growing areas in the nation. In 2006, visitors to our area exceeded five million, with more than 350,000 European visitors.

We understand that Northwest Airlines has applied for expansion of the Northwest/KLM antitrust immunized (ATI) alliance to include additional SkyTeam transatlantic partners. Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) supports this application and Northwest Airline's efforts to improve and expand its transatlantic network.

As explained in their application, a more integrated SkyTeam alliance offers substantial advantages to consumers, including improved flight schedules, reduced travel times, new service, and lower fares. A more integrated SkyTeam Alliance will benefit our community with more options for travel to Europe. We believe it is very important that the Department of Transportation approve this application.

All the pieces are in place to support prompt and favorable action on this request by the Department of Transportation. Northwest Airlines and its partners have presented a transatlantic joint venture agreement, and ATI is necessary for them to proceed with their plans. The new U.S.-EU agreement removes all regulatory barriers to transatlantic competition, making an already vibrant market even more competitive. We welcome the enhanced transatlantic service and competition Northwest Airlines and its SkyTeam partners would create with their expanded alliance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

LEE COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY

Robert M. Ball, A.A.E.
Executive Director

cc: Docket OST-07-28644
Marcus Kemper, Northwest Airlines

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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