

## SENATE COLLOQUY EXCERPT

### EAS Service

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, with regard to the fiscal year 2008 continuing resolution that the Senate is taking up today, I would like to pose a question to the Senators from West Virginia and Washington. It is my understanding that the Commerce Committee has drafted a bill to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration, FAA, and that bill, S. 1300, should reach the Senate floor this session. That bill includes language with regard to Essential Air Service, EAS, to extend the state-determined mileage waiver. I thank the Committee for its work on that provision as it affects an airport in my State, as well as airports in South Dakota and Pennsylvania. In the interim, I would like to clarify that it is the intention of the Appropriations and Commerce Committees that EAS support continue for the airports in Hagerstown, MD; Brookings, SD; and Lancaster, PA along with the other airports nationwide that will continue to receive EAS funding through the Continuing Resolution today. I would direct this question to the chairman of the Commerce Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety & Security if it has intent to continue EAS support for airports in Hagerstown, MD; Brookings, SD; and Lancaster, PA?

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Yes. We do hope to pass the full FAA authorization this session, and it contains the EAS mileage waiver. In the interim, it is the intent of the Committee that EAS funding should continue to these airports.

Mr. CARDIN. I would further like to get the views of the chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies on this matter.

Mrs. MURRAY. This continuing resolution provides funding for the Essential Air Service program at the current rate with the expectation that the program shall continue to function as it is functioning now. We expect the Department of Transportation to avoid any major policy decisions that can impact this program during the period of the continuing resolution-- especially given the fact that there is already legislation reported out of committee and awaiting Senate action that addresses the continuation of air service to these communities.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I commend my colleague from Maryland for addressing this issue. I am a member of the Appropriations Committee and I, too, understand that the Committee intends to continue EAS funding under the

continuing resolution to airports in Maryland, South Dakota, and Pennsylvania that currently receive it.

Mr. SPECTER. This issue also affects an airport in my home State, in Lancaster, PA. Based on the provisions in the full FAA authorization, I agree that it is the intent of the committee that EAS funding should be extended to the airports currently affected by the EAS state-determination mileage waiver.

Mr. JOHNSON. An airport in Bookings, SD, is also affected by the state-determination mileage waiver. So I am pleased to hear from all of my fellow appropriators that EAS funding should continue uninterrupted to the affected airports.