



# CITY OF ORLANDO

OFFICE OF  
BUDDY DYER  
MAYOR

November 29, 2007

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

Re: *Docket DOT-OST-2007-0006*  
*Support for JetBlue's Application to Offer Orlando-Bogota Service*

Dear Secretary Peters:

Congratulations on the recent bilateral air service agreement with Colombia expanding commercial flight opportunities. This agreement was a great accomplishment for consumers and the US economy. As discussed below, the agreement holds great promise for the economy of Central Florida and passengers and shippers that rely on Orlando International Airport.

As the Mayor of Orlando, I write to express my strong support for JetBlue's application to offer the first non-stop air service link between Orlando and Bogota. This would be the first non-stop scheduled air service between Central Florida and Colombia. I am delighted that a carrier the caliber of JetBlue has applied for authority to serve this route. I strongly believe awarding Orlando-Bogota non-stop service to JetBlue would be the highest and best public use of the limited new US-Colombia routes.

Currently there is no non-stop commercial air service between Central Florida and Colombia. Unlike other applications which seek to expand existing Colombia service, JetBlue is seeking to start new service in a new market.

The case for Orlando-Bogota non-stop service is compelling. Orlando is a very popular and steadily growing destination for Colombians visiting the US. According to the US Department of Commerce, more than 20 percent of the Colombians who traveled to the US in 2006 – nearly 80,000 – visited Orlando. Overall, Orlando is the second most popular US destination for Colombian visitors behind only Miami. Miami benefits from 13 daily non-stop Colombian flights.

Central Florida is home to a significant number of Hispanic residents. Among them is an important and growing number of residents with Colombian roots. In fact, between 1990 and 2000, the number of Central Florida residents of Colombian descent rose 136 percent. Overall, there are more than 353,000 residents of Hispanic nationalities in Central Florida – around 20 percent of the Metro Orlando population – and Orlando International Airport is the airport gateway they rely on.

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There also is significant and growing commercial trade between Central Florida and Colombia. Overall, Colombia is the fifth largest Florida-origin export destination and the seventh largest Florida merchandise trading partner.

Madame Secretary, I firmly believe the public's interest and the nation's interest would be served best by awarding JetBlue the Orlando-Bogota route authority it seeks. By doing so, you would open the door to the first non-stop scheduled air service link between Central Florida and Colombia.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support of JetBlue's application. Should you or your staff have any questions or if I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Buddy Dyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Buddy Dyer  
Mayor

cc: ✓ Michael Reynolds, Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Susan McDermott, Deputy Assistant Secretary