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OST-1997-2515-12

CITY OF
KIRKSVILLE

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

DOCKETS

Administration 660.627.1225 • Human Resources 660.627.1458

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2005 JAN 31 P 2:57

January 28, 2005

The Honorable Norman Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
Department of Transportation
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Kirksville, Missouri - Essential Air Service
Docket OST-1997-2515 -12

Dear Mr. Mineta:

I am writing to share our community's strong opposition to the potential elimination of the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program at Kirksville Regional Airport. If the EAS program is discontinued in Kirksville it will have a devastating impact on not only our community, but the entire region.

As the economic hub for northeast and north central Missouri, Kirksville relies on our scheduled airline service. Not only has it come to be relied upon by many businesses and organizations, but it is an important tool for economic development. Our region has been adversely impacted by recent downturns in the economy. Industrial plant closings have left residents without employment, and our efforts to draw these jobs back into the area would be negatively affected by not having access to commercial air service. Companies who are looking at rural areas look at the ease with which they can travel between the rural plant and their other plants or headquarters. Thus, a community with scheduled air service would be considered much more favorably than one without this service. As you can see, for Kirksville this truly is **essential** air service.

We have had discussions with several air carriers who have indicated their interest in serving Kirksville Regional Airport, with a subsidy below the \$200 per passenger cap. We will continue to work with the selected carrier to increase the number of passengers and enhance our service, so that we can sustain commercial service in Kirksville.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Debbie Masten
Mayor