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Department
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Pete K. Rahn, Director

January 25, 2005

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary of Transportation
Department of Transportation, 400 7th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Mineta:

Subject: Essential Air Service Program – Kirksville, Missouri
Docket OST-1997-2515-17

I am writing to strongly oppose the elimination of the Essential Air Service (EAS) Program at the Kirksville Regional Airport. The department's continuation of the Essential Air Service subsidy is critical to the stability and economic success of Kirksville and the north central Missouri region.

The City of Kirksville has a population of approximately 17,000 and is home to Truman State University and the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine. The city and surrounding region are not served by an interstate highway system and the availability of a scheduled commercial airline is a critical transportation service need.

The City of Kirksville serves as the economic center for much of the north central Missouri region and the Kirksville Regional Airport annually provides approximately \$2.8 million in economic impact. Commercial airline service is a key economic lifeline for this area. Discontinuing the EAS program at Kirksville would create a significant transportation void for both Kirksville and the north central Missouri region.

I hope you will continue to work closely with the City of Kirksville and the commercial air service providers to address the air service needs in Kirksville and the north central Missouri region.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Pete K. Rahn
Director

cc: Senator Christopher Bond
Senator Jim Talent
Congressman Kenny Hulshof
State Senator John Cauthorn

State Representative Bob Behnen
Mr. Dennis DeVany
Mayor Debbie Masten