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April 16, 2007

Aloha Ley
Associate Director, X-50
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street, SW, Room 6401
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Small Community Air Service Development Grant Application
Docket OST-2007-27370 - 180
Grand Junction, CO

Dear Ms. Ley:

As President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Health Plans, I am sending you this letter in support of the Small Community Air Service Development Grant Application, intended to improve air service from Walker Field Airport.

Rocky Mountain Health Plans is a Colorado-based, not-for-profit organization. Our home base is in Grand Junction. We have an office in Denver and also have offices in several other communities in Colorado. We book frequent trips to conduct business throughout the State of Colorado, as well as to Washington, D.C. and other major U.S. cities. We have found in the last couple of years that local demand for flights has made it increasingly difficult to book seats and ticket prices are, most often, very high. It is not uncommon for us to spend \$500 for a round trip ticket from Grand Junction to Denver, if we can even find seats available at the times we need for conducting business in Denver!

As you evaluate the merits of this application, I encourage you to consider how critically important air service is to this isolated part of the country. Grand Junction is located more than 250 miles from major airline hubs in Denver and Salt Lake City. Our business requires reasonable access to air service at Walker Field Airport which is why we support this application and will take every opportunity to use the resultant air service improvements.

We are pleased to have the opportunity to support this grant application.

Sincerely,

John Hopkins
President and CEO

www.rmhp.org

Grand Junction —
Headquarters
2775 Crossroads Blvd.
Grand Junction, CO 81506
970-244-7760

Denver
5990 Greenwood Plaza Blvd.
Suite 125
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303-689-7367

Durango
72 Suttle Street
Suite C
Durango, CO 81303
970-385-5131

Pueblo
503 N. Main Street
Suite 718
Pueblo, CO 81003
719-253-3900