

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 9, 2016

The Honorable Susan McDermott
Assistant Secretary for Aviation and
International Affairs
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Assistant Secretary McDermott:

In response to the Department of Transportation's Order 2016-5-17 issued on May 20, 2016, we write in support of continued Essential Air Service (EAS) eligibility for San Luis Valley Regional Airport (ALS) in Alamosa, Colorado.

ALS airport is the gateway to Colorado's San Luis Valley and Great Sand Dunes National Park, a crown jewel of the National Park System. If eligibility is terminated, commercial service is likely to cease entirely forcing users of the airport to travel more than 125 miles to the nearest airport with commercial service and nearly 200 miles to the nearest large or medium airport hub.

It's also clear that demand for flights to the region does exist as the airport is currently going through a competitive bidding process with multiple airlines for continued commercial service. With this bidding process ongoing, we believe it is appropriate to continue EAS eligibility and allow San Luis Valley Regional Airport to meet the necessary requirements established in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Modernization and Reform Act of 2012.

In order for the rural communities which make up the San Luis Valley to be economically competitive, it's important that they have continued access to our nation's commercial airspace. With this in mind, we urge you to continue Essential Air Service eligibility for ALS in Alamosa, Colorado.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress