

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

August 2, 2011

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: OST-2011-0119  
Application of Spokane International Airport

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to express my strong support for Spokane International Airport in its application for grant funding under the Small Community Air Service Development Program. Spokane International Airport is requesting \$1,000,000 to recruit a carrier to provide much-needed nonstop service to Los Angeles and Southern California.

Spokane International Airport is a critical regional hub that drives economic growth throughout the Inland Northwest. Currently, air access to Los Angeles and Southern California is completed entirely via connecting flights. This deters business, tourist, and leisure traffic and places Spokane at a disadvantage both as a departure point and destination. Historical service to the Los Angeles area has demonstrated strong passenger demand and – if re-established – would turn into Spokane International Airport's second biggest passenger destination. Southern California is a largely untapped market and nonstop access from the Inland Northwest would foster the exchange of ideas and goods, help expand local business, facilitate new tourism activities, and create jobs.

This grant is intended to provide short-term risk-offsets to target carriers that have the route systems and fleets to implement nonstop flights to the Los Angeles region. After the initial incubation period while grant funds are expended, Spokane International Airport anticipates that passenger demand will ensure long-term sustainability of the new route(s). The Inland Northwest offers a strong opportunity for additional service to California, and Spokane International Airport demonstrates a proper use of this seed funding. This grant application is strongly supported by the Spokane business community, which has come together to raise a 20-percent match for the grant funds.

I ask that you give Spokane International Airport's grant application your fullest consideration.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

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