

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 15, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx,  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

We write to support the petition submitted by the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport to remain in the Essential Air Service (EAS) program. We understand that due to a variety of factors, including a pilot shortage, the airport experienced a temporary decline in enplanements which resulted in exceeding the program support cap by a modest \$13 per passenger. The City of Pendleton is confident that with the selection of a new, reputable air service provider coupled with demand increasing, enplanements will continue to meet or exceed minimum EAS threshold requirements, and the per passenger subsidy will soon fall below the \$200 program support cap.

The EAS program supports provides critical air service for businesses and residents throughout Pendleton and rural Eastern Oregon. Maintaining safe, reliable and affordable air service is a linchpin for business development and expansion, helps remove barriers of access to urgent and specialized health care services, and serves thousands of passengers seeking connecting flights through Portland International Airport (PDX). Driving to or from the PDX requires over a three hour drive and is simply not a reasonable alternative for most air travelers.

We understand the importance of USDOT being prudent in its oversight of limited resources and appreciate the due diligence required to manage these appropriately. In this instance, we believe that the continuation of the EAS program is crucial to economic growth in Eastern Oregon and we request respectfully your favorable support of this petition.

Thank you very much for your full and fair consideration of this request. We look forward to your response.

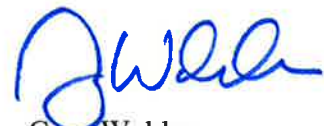
Sincerely,



Ron Wyden  
U.S. Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
U.S. Senator



Greg Walden  
U.S. Representative