

April 15, 2016

Brooke Chapman, Associate Director
Small Community Air Service Department
Office of Aviation Analysis
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Chapman:

I fully support the Small Community Air Service Development, Docket DOT-Ost-2015-0126, grant application submitted by the Billings Logan International Airport. The leadership at the Billings airport has a long history of supporting air service development through both traditional and non-traditional means. They have been very successful at increasing the number of airlines and direct city flights into the City of Billings. However, even with those efforts Montana remains one of the last major underserved areas of the United States.

If successful, this grant will help to facilitate new direct air service into a hub in the South Central United States, benefiting the consumers of air travel. Community financial support is being solicited to provide the necessary matching funds. The funds will be used to create a package to attract a major carrier to the Billings International Airport.

The economic benefits of access to a new market accrue not only to the consumers of air travel, but also to the local, regional, and state economies. Access to a new hub in the South Central United States will present numerous growth opportunities in commerce and tourism, the second largest industry in the State of Montana.

Having new direct air service provides Montana citizens the opportunity to access more destinations with fewer connections, and at lower fares. Just as importantly, this new direct air service provides travelers from the southern half of the United States better access with lower fares into Montana.

Thank you for giving this grant proposal fair and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve Daines
United States Senator