

June 27, 2019

Brooke Chapman, Associate Director
Small Community Air Service Development Program
Office of Aviation Analysis
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE W86-307
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Docket DOT-OST-2019-0071, Columbia Regional Airport

Dear Ms. Chapman:

I am writing this letter today to express my support for Columbia Regional Airport's submission to receive the Small Community Air Service Development Program (SCASDP) grant. Columbia Regional Airport (COU) passenger numbers continue to grow and as such, COU has become the travel base for Mid-Missouri. With service to Denver, Dallas, and Chicago, Columbia residents and Missourians from across the state are becoming accustomed to choosing COU over St. Louis and/or Kansas City.

Columbia Missouri is a thriving, growing community. We are home to several higher education institutions, including the University of Missouri, Columbia College, and Stephens College. As the home of two internationally known festivals, the Roots N Blues N BBQ Festival and the True/False Film Fest, visitors from around the world are familiar with the city's cultural attractions. Our parks and trails receive national recognition and attract outdoor adventurers from across the country. Columbia also is known as a medical destination for both research and for those seeking medical treatment. Since the University of Missouri joined the Southeastern Conference (SEC) in 2012, we have seen visitation grow from cities across the United States that did not historically travel to Mid-Missouri.

These are just a few of the many reasons people travel to our destination. The addition of a new hub will allow us to open our doors to visitors who may not currently be considering travel to Columbia due to perceived difficulty in travelling to the area.

Tourism is an important industry to Missouri, Boone County and Columbia bringing over \$412 million to our area last year alone and over 11,000 jobs annually. As the director of Columbia's tourism office, I see the value of adding an option that will allow direct access to and from the east coast. I strongly encourage your funding of this grant.

Sincerely,

Amy Schneider, Director

Columbia Convention and Visitors Bureau