

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 18, 2018

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

We are deeply concerned about the decision made by the Department of Transportation to terminate Essential Air Service (EAS) waiver eligibility for the Chautauqua County-Jamestown Airport in Jamestown, New York. We strongly urge you to reverse this decision.

Access to commercial air service through the EAS program is a lifeline for rural communities across the United States, including Chautauqua County, and is vital to continued economic development and quality of life. Terminating EAS waiver eligibility for the Chautauqua County-Jamestown Airport will deprive residents and businesses in Chautauqua County from having local access to commercial air travel, which is important to the region's economic development and tourism industry. Other industries, including manufacturing and medical services rely on commercial air service to connect to the global marketplace. Additionally, the airport directly supports 146 jobs with an estimated \$9.9 million in income.

The DOT's decision failed to address the local economic impacts this fatal decision would have on Jamestown's local affairs. We disagree with DOT's conclusion that it is "highly unlikely that the community would come into compliance in the future" in terms of addressing the metric numbers. Jamestown has spent nearly \$400 million dollars in public and private investments that benefits the town's tourism and job's industry that would help to improve those numbers.

Specifically, there are over 940 established businesses in the 14701 zip code (Jamestown) with nearly 15,000 employees and an annual payroll of nearly \$500 million dollars, and commercial air service to the Chautauqua County-Jamestown Airport is a key component of the local and regional economy. Over the past few months, the airport has seen a surge of flights by nearly 50%, and that number is expected to increase with the revitalization of Downtown Jamestown and increased tourism as a result of the opening of the National Comedy Center this summer.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we hope you will reconsider this decision and ensure that the Chautauqua County-Jamestown Airport is able to obtain an EAS waiver this year.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator