

Boone County Regional Airport



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April 6, 2020

Mr. Joel Szabat
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Szabat:

The Boone County Regional Airport Administrative Board hereby requests that Southern Airways Express be allowed to temporarily reduce air service by 50% of weekly flights, at continuing full subsidy levels, for an 81-day period beginning on April 10, 2020 and concluding on June 30, 2020. Due to the massive passenger reductions suffered under the COVID-19 pandemic, our traffic has declined to very minimal levels. Southern Airways Express, in coordination with this governing body, would ask to reserve the right to reinstate flights as needed based on passenger demand prior to June 30, 2020.

We request that the Department continue to pay Southern Airways Express 100% of the full subsidy they would have received for operating a full schedule. This will help Southern Airways Express survive a precarious situation and will partially compensate for the lost passenger revenue on our near-empty flights. It would also retain our daily connection to the national transportation system and would continue to facilitate essential travel and the shipment of supplies to our communities.

Importantly, the reduced flight schedule will assist in cost containment for our airport, given the reduced revenue resulting from Federal and State COVID-19 measures. Southern Airways Express agrees to honor all leases for our facilities during this period, easing our funding shortfall. Further, Southern has agreed to continue paying its local employees during this crisis, even before any additional federal assistance may be received.

We want Southern Airways Express to remain our Essential Air Service carrier, and we recognize this temporary action will help facilitate the survival of Southern in the short-term, thereby ensuring uninterrupted service both now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Judy McCutcheon, Airport Manager