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Subject: Altoona EAS Route
Date: Monday, June 29, 2020 8:45:33 PM

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Hello I'm emailing you about the upcoming contract for the Altoona PA EAS Route. I personally have been using Altoona Blair County Airport for both private and commercial use. I've trained there and have also been able to work for Southern Airways Express and have been working for them since September 2019. After reading the information about the company that has been there (Southern Airways Express) and the company that the Altoona Airport Board recommend (Boutique Air), not only will I lose the opportunity to work at my home airport and serve my community member, but there will be many of my pilot coworkers that will have to move from their homes while their jobs are being taken by pilots who are from different areas from the country. My bias is obvious however that's not why it's my belief that the Altoona Airport Board made an incredibly selfish decision in choosing Boutique Air. Boutique's bid for Altoona is half a million dollars more than that of Southern Airways Express per year. That means for two years one million dollars more of tax payers' money has to go to Boutique Air. In my opinion that's not where our tax dollars should be going to when the country as a whole is in the condition that it's in and I can imagine almost all of my fellow community members would agree. I believe the community members would be furious if one million of their tax dollars went to Boutique most likely for the increased operating cost of their airplanes. The Pilatus PC-12 (Boutique) is a good airplane however is complete over kill for the EAS Route structure out of Altoona. It's a pressurized airplane (which is one of the many reasons for the increased operating costs) however is not necessary for the flight time it takes to go from Altoona Airport to Pittsburgh or Baltimore. The Pilatus can make each trip in under an hour because of that they would most likely cruise at around 10,000ft. The pressurization is not useful for flights at that flight altitude nor was the reason for its design in air travel. The Cessna Caravan (Southern Airways Express plane) carries more persons per flight at a cheaper operating cost. Therefore is more efficient for the EAS Route in Altoona Airport. EAS Routes are meant to be like a taxi service that is what Southern Airways Express provides at very reasonable fares. Boutique is extremely unnecessary and uneconomical. The Altoona board decision was selfish and ultimately was a disservice to their community. The D.O.T makes the final decision. I urge you to keep Southern Airways Express in Altoona. Don't let half a million dollars of our tax dollars annually go to operating costs to a company that uses expensive operating airplanes. Thank you for your time
Maverick Woodling