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April 30, 2020

The Honorable Joel Szabat
Assistant Secretary of Aviation and International Affairs
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590 Re: DOT-OST-2020-0037

Assistant Secretary Szbat:

The Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) provides economic development services to Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties in the Greater Lansing, Michigan region. Flight service through the Capital Region International Airport (LAN) is critically important for both domestic and global business attraction efforts, as well as supply chain connectivity. Delta Airlines is the principal carrier offering air service in and out of the Capital Region International airport which also serves the entire mid-Michigan area.

On behalf LEAP's entire board of directors, comprised of the region's fortune 500 business, higher education and municipal leaders, I am writing to express our concern regarding Delta Airline's request to seek an exemption from minimum service obligations for LAN. We believe granting this request would harm our regional economy and compromise our ability to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

LAN continues to play a vital role in our regional economy, particularly when it comes to serving as a gateway in moving passengers and cargo around the world. Our business community depends on the easy access to our local airport to provide convenient, reliable connections to over 500 global destinations. Spending an extra hour or more on the road to travel from another airport is a significant inconvenience from both time and financial standpoint.

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, our region was rapidly progressing through \$3.6 billion in active and planned development projects. When these projects resume as our economy is re-opened, the airport is well-positioned to provide the infrastructure our area needs to succeed and grow.

LAN has been doing its part to continue to provide reliable service to its region during the COVID-19 crisis. Despite having to cut costs significantly, LAN still maintains the highest level of security and safety for its passengers, staff and airline employees. As an acknowledgement of the vital role LAN plays, the federal government has determined that LAN is eligible for \$10.3 million in funds through the CARES Act.

Delta Airlines is also in line to receive CARES funding, which requires the airline to meet minimum services standards. Eliminating service in LAN, Michigan's state capital, would not meet those standards.



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While non-essential travel is currently not allowed in our state, essential personnel and supplies are moving in and out of our region, thanks in large part to Capital Region International Airport. It is critical we have services available to move essential personnel who must travel, and to move essential products, such as face masks for health care workers.

Additionally, as we begin to open up our economy, service at LAN is needed to meet increasing passenger and cargo demands. As such, Delta Airlines must continue service to our community's airport.

LEAP respectfully requests USDOT deny Delta Airline's request for an exemption from minimum service obligations. Alternatively, if the USDOT were to consider granting the Delta request, it should only be granted for the period when travel is limited by the Michigan Governor's Executive Order.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert L. Trezise, Jr.", is positioned above the typed name.

Robert L. Trezise, Jr.
President & CEO
Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP)