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March 28, 2019

Scott Faulk
Transportation Industry Analyst
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Aviation Analysis
EAS & Domestic Analysis Division

RE: Essential Air Service Program for Imperial County Airport.

As the mayor of the City of Imperial, I respectfully request your assistance and support for Imperial County Airport's (IPL) continued participation in the Department of Transportation's Essential Air Service (EAS) program.

On February 12, 2019 Southern Airways announced the completion of the acquisition of Mokulele Airlines. It is the request of the City Council of the City of Imperial that the Department of Transportation not put out a new bid for Essential Air Service providers. We believe that Southern Airways will be able to maintain continuity of service for IPL passengers.

Southern Airways began in 2013 by offering flights from Memphis, Tenn. to Destin, Fla. using a total of four pilots and three aircraft. In 2015, Southern acquired Executive Express Aviation, the Illinois-based charter company that was previously contracted to operate Southern's flight schedule. In February 2016, Southern acquired Sun Air Express, a commuter airline operating Essential Air Service (EAS) contracts in the mid-Atlantic. Today, Southern still operates routes in those original Sun Air-served Pennsylvania and Maryland communities, plus three additional cities in the mid-Atlantic, along with three EAS cities in Arkansas. In November 2018, Southern launched service between Palm Beach, Tampa, and Key West, replacing routes abandoned by Silver Airways.



Commercial service to the airport is a critical component in the future economic growth of Imperial Valley. We accept Southern Airways as the regional EAS provider and appreciate your consideration to maintain operations without further disruption.

Sincerely,

Robert Amparano
Mayor of the City of Imperial

cc: Darrell Pechtl, Mayor Pro Tem
Geoff Dale, Councilmember
Karin Eugenio, Councilmember
James Tucker, Councilmember