

ATTACHMENT #2

Jeannie Johnson

From: Katie Manly [Katie.manly@cch-llc.com]
Sent: Monday, August 31, 2009 8:02 AM
To: Jeannie Johnson; Kim Kiefer
Cc: John Roots
Subject: FAA Needs to Strengthen Selection and Award Processes for Airport Improvement Grants

Jeannie,

Senator Murkowski's letter to the FAA asking about stimulus funding for JNU is very timely. The FAA's Inspector General recently issued a report criticizing the way FAA has distributed its stimulus funding. Below is a summary and afterward a link to the whole document.

FAA Needs to Strengthen Selection and Award Processes for Airport Improvement Grants

Thursday, August 6, 2009

The Recovery Act calls for the FAA to award \$1.1 billion in grants to airport operators for projects that improve airport safety, capacity, and security. When reviewing FAA's process for selecting and funding the projects, the agency's Office of Inspector General (OIG) found that FAA selected some low-priority projects that have questionable economic merit—a key Recovery Act requirement. Also, in some cases, FAA awarded money to recipients with histories of grant-management problems, which raised doubts about their ability to administer effectively their Recovery funds. The OIG urged the FAA to revise its guidance on selecting Recovery-related airport improvement projects, and to ensure that funding is awarded only for the highest-priority projects with demonstrated economic merit. In addition, the OIG recommended that FAA provide stronger oversight of the entities receiving grant money.

<http://www.recovery.gov/sites/default/files/AIP+ARRA+Advisory+08-06-09.pdf>

Katie

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9/2/2009

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August 26, 2009

Teri Bristol
Vice President
Technical Operations Services
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Ms. Bristol:

I am writing to discuss the Juneau International Airport's Approach Lighting System. I appreciate you taking the time to consider my views.

As you know, the Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights (MALSR) on runway 26 is a long-running priority for Juneau and the region. The MALSR project will increase the safety and reliability of operations at the Juneau International Airport. Congress recognized the importance of this project by recommending \$2 million be included in the Approach Lighting System Improvement Program (ALSIP) funding in the conference report the Fiscal Year 2001 Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

I am concerned, however, by the potential use of funding recommended in the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act. The conference report for the 2009 bill contained a \$2.375 million recommendation to be used for "airfields in Alaska." I understand that the FAA is considering using this funding to speed completion of the Juneau MALSR project. While I believe completion of the Juneau project should be a top priority, I believe the \$2.375 million recommended in the omnibus is intended for use in the State of Alaska's Rural Airport Improvement Program (RALP).

While both projects are important, the RALP serves a different purpose than the Juneau MALSR project. The RALP is focused on building basic infrastructure on relatively undeveloped runways in remote villages. The lighting is necessary to provide for safe and reliable travel into remote communities. Additionally, I have secured \$1 million for the Juneau MALSR project in the Senate committee report for the Fiscal Year 2010 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations bill. I hope to see this funding retained in the final Conference Report for the bill.

I would also like to clarify conflicting reports on the remaining cost of the MALSR project. Various stakeholders have provided different estimates. Additionally, I have been informed that some necessary equipment may have already been purchased.

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Finally, I would appreciate an interpretation of Juneau's ability to apply for grant funding provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus bill. As you probably know, the Juneau Airport is owned by the municipality and not eligible for certain funding sources made available to state airports. I believe the shovel-ready Juneau project would compare favorably with other priorities.

I respectfully urge you to make completion of the runway 26 MALSR project a priority, without the use of the "airfields in Alaska" funding from the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Additionally, please provide me with an updated cost estimate for the MALSR project and an assessment of Juneau's ability to compete for stimulus funding.

Again, thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lisa Murkowski".

Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator