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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-5401**

March 9, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: JetBlue Airways DCA-SJU Application for DOT-OST-2012-0029

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I write to express my strong support for the application filed by JetBlue Airways for two of the eight beyond-perimeter slot exemptions being made available to limited incumbent carriers for new service at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) pursuant to Section 414 of the *FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012*. If this application is approved, JetBlue would commence nonstop service between Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport (SJU) in San Juan, Puerto Rico and DCA.

I support timely approval of this application for two principal reasons. First, nonstop service between SJU and DCA would expand consumer choice for the 9.4 million residents of both markets—that is, the 5.6 million residents of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and the 3.8 million residents of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. JetBlue would fill a void for these markets, since there is no direct flight currently offered between these two airports.

Second, I support the application because such nonstop service would enhance travel and trade between San Juan—a U.S. jurisdiction and the leading economic, industrial and political center in the Caribbean region—and our nation's capital. Such direct service would further business ties, attract investment, and facilitate government-to-government contacts between the two cities. Importantly, direct service would provide U.S. travelers an additional means to connect with the maritime cruise industry that operates in and out of Puerto Rico. Increasing the number of cruise ships that choose to homeport and embark passengers in San Juan is an economic development goal of the government of Puerto Rico, and this flight would give the cruise industry added incentive to make San Juan its homeport since there would be an additional air link for its customers.

JetBlue is reported to have grown nearly 40 percent over the last year in Puerto Rico, and now offers more seats to and from the Island than any other airline. Currently, JetBlue operates non-stop flights between San Juan and JFK, Boston, Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, Santo Domingo, and St. Maarten. Next month, JetBlue is scheduled to add nonstop service between San Juan and Newark. These flights complement the twice-daily flight the airline

operates between San Juan and St. Thomas and the once-daily flight it operates between San Juan and St. Croix—which connect the U.S. Virgin Islands to key hub airports in the national air transportation system.

JetBlue has also established a codeshare agreement with Cape Air to ensure its passengers can connect seamlessly to flights from San Juan to the western Puerto Rico city of Mayagüez and from San Juan to Vieques, a non-contiguous Puerto Rico municipality that is dependent upon this air link. Cape Air also connects Puerto Rico with Tortola and Anguilla.

JetBlue's impressive presence in the San Juan and Caribbean markets—and its partnership with Cape Air—demonstrate its strength as one of our nation's leading low-cost airlines, its capacity to sustainably operate the route it seeks approval to offer, and its commitment to the U.S. jurisdiction of Puerto Rico.

As you make decisions as to which carriers to grant these new slot exemptions at DCA, I respectfully request that you take into full account my support for JetBlue's DCA-SJU application, consistent with all applicable laws, agency regulations and established guidelines. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pierluisi", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pedro R. Pierluisi  
Member of Congress