

ANNUAL CORPORATE SPONSORS

July 22, 2016



The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590



Re: Docket DOT-OST-2016-0021



Dear Mr. Secretary:



On behalf of the nearly 700 members of Arlington Chamber of Commerce, we strongly encourage the Department of Transportation to reconsider allowing United Airlines to offer direct flights to Havana's José Martí International Airport from Washington Dulles International Airport. This letter is in reference to our previous letter of support submitted March 9, 2016.



The Arlington Chamber of Commerce was disappointed that the Department of Transportation's preliminary decision did not include Dulles as one of the airports to offer direct service to Havana. According to the 2010 Census there are over 25,000 Cuban Americans living in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia which Dulles International Airport serves. Specifically, the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area has one of the top ten Cuban American populations in the country.



In order to provide travel opportunities for the region's large Cuban American population and government officials, it is critical that Virginia and our nation's capital obtain nonstop air service to Havana. United Airlines' Washington Dulles-Havana service would naturally provide an important link between capital cities, fostering official travel between the U.S. and Cuban governments and increasing the role of intergovernmental organizations with Cuba.



Washington Dulles – Havana service would also increase the range of consumer options for travel to Cuba from the East Coast. Moreover, Dulles is well situated in United Airlines' domestic network and would provide one-stop connecting opportunities for passengers from several central and western cities in the United States allowing United to maintain ongoing service.



As you review this tentative decision, we hope you take the capital-to-capital service into consideration and allow United Airlines to offer Saturday service between the two capital cities.



Sincerely,



Kate Bates
President & CEO

