

Kathy Taylor

August 15, 2013

The Honorable Eric Holder
United States Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

As a former Mayor of Tulsa, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and an executive in the transportation industry, I am disappointed by the United States Department of Justice decision to challenge the merger between American Airlines and US Airways. I understand that part of the concern with the merger, particularly for the six states that joined the Justice Department's challenge, concerns the number of gates that the two airlines would control at certain airports.

American Airlines has been struggling to maintain profitability for almost a decade. Failure to approve this merger drastically limits American Airlines' ability to survive and will in fact serve to limit competition in the airline industry. Further, interests in job creation and retention require American Airlines to end its bankruptcy as soon as possible and **free market** principles should dictate fares and fees within the airline industry.

Prolonging American Airlines' stay in Chapter 11 bankruptcy furthers the uncertainty of jobs for the 6,000 American Airlines employees in Tulsa and continues a volatile situation for thousands of families who have already conceded a great deal in terms of wages and benefits since American Airlines filed for bankruptcy. These Tulsa families have been in a holding pattern since 2011 and the **untimely** Justice Department challenge will only extend their suffering, which is unacceptable.

The Justice Department's challenge harms American Airlines' ability to emerge from bankruptcy as a strong competitor. This will serve to bolster the duopoly of Delta and United and exacerbate the very problem the Justice Department's challenge seeks to address. While I appreciate the concern for consumers, I wonder why it wasn't called into question over the past decade as antitrust regulations permitted four similar airline mergers since 2005. If other airlines can structure similar mergers, American and US Airways should be afforded the same opportunity to serve their customers and their employees.

If the Justice Department had issued its challenge in late January, when it first began its review of the merger, there would have been more time to negotiate and reach an amicable solution. Issuing a challenge just two days before American Airlines' hearing to approve its bankruptcy plan shows a complete lack of concern over the future of jobs for American Airlines employees in my community. The Justice Department's challenge all but guarantees that further restructuring will come at the expense of jobs and employee benefits, adding an even heavier burden on workers who have already compromised so much.

In the interest of the future of America's transportation industry and jobs in America, I ask you and the Department of Justice to withdraw its challenge to the American Airlines/US Airways merger and allow two great American companies to continue to provide first class service to consumers and thousands of jobs to Americans.

Sincerely,



Kathy Taylor
Mayor of Tulsa 2006 – 2009
Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce 2003 – 2006

CC:

Senator Jim Inhofe, U.S. Senate
Senator Tom Coburn, U.S. Senate
Representative Jim Bridenstine, U.S. House of Representatives
Governor Mary Fallin, State of Oklahoma
Attorney General Scott Pruitt, State of Oklahoma
Senator Brian Bingman, President Pro Tempore, Oklahoma State Senate
Senator Sean Burrage, Minority Leader, Oklahoma State Senate
Representative T.W. Shannon, Speaker of the House, Oklahoma State House of Representatives
Representative Scott Inman, Minority Leader, Oklahoma State House of Representatives
Secretary Dave Lopez, Oklahoma Department of Commerce
Mayor Dewey Bartlett, Jr., Tulsa, Oklahoma
Councilor David Patrick, Chairman, Tulsa City Council
Mr. Dale Danker, President, Transportation Workers Union Local 514
Mr. Doug Parker, President, US Airways
Mr. Bill Collins, President, American Airlines
Mr. Jeff Mulder, Director, Tulsa International Airport
Mr. Mike Neal, Tulsa Metro Chamber of Commerce