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U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Aviation
Administration

Office of the Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20581

November 21, 2003

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman, Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
241 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0303

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I have received your November 13, 2003 letter regarding the issue of contracting out functions performed by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees. Your letter requested clarification on the status of "contracting out" of FAA functions related to flight services and the certification or maintenance of air traffic control equipment used in the national airspace system. I understand that you are not advocating that the FAA in-source any functions currently performed by contractors or cease work and analysis already underway. As you know, several months ago the FAA initiated a competitive sourcing process with respect to the FAA's Automated Flight Service Stations (AFSS). Under the FAA's current schedule, the final source selection decision with respect to the AFSS competition will occur early in fiscal year 2005.

During this fiscal year we have no plans to initiate additional competitive sourcing studies, nor will we displace FAA employees by entering into binding contracts to convert to private entities any existing FAA position directly related to our air traffic control system.

I look forward to working with the Committee on the important challenges facing the Federal Aviation Administration. The Conference Report contains many provisions which will provide us with important tools to enhance aviation safety, security, and capacity. Thank you for your efforts on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Marion C. Blakey
Administrator

cc:

Senator Hollings, Senator Lott, Senator Rockefeller, and Senator Dorgan

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