

Resolution No. 2011-2

of the

Aviation Advisory Board

Resolution Recommending Creation of a Task Force to Examine the Impact of Proposed Postal Hub Expansion and Consequences of Potential Changes to the United States Postal Service (USPS) Bypass Mail System to Alaska's Transportation System.

WHEREAS, The State of Alaska is the largest State in the Union and has a very limited system of roads connecting communities; and

WHEREAS, Air travel within the State of Alaska is often hampered by severe weather conditions and treacherous terrain; and

WHEREAS, The United States federal government owns nearly two-thirds of Alaska's landmass, including large tracts of land separating isolated communities within the State; and

WHEREAS, Such federal ownership has inhibited the ability of Alaskans to build roads connecting isolated communities; and

WHEREAS, Most communities and a large portion of the population within the State can only be reached by air; and

WHEREAS, The vast majority of food items and everyday necessities destined for these isolated communities and populations can only be transported through the air; and

WHEREAS, The USPS has announced the establishment of new postal hubs in Alaska; and

WHEREAS, The new postal hubs will have the unintended consequences of negatively impacting existing hubs' commerce, regional passenger and non-mail freight service, access to health care service, education, and will shift costs of these impacts to other state, federal and private entities; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's aviation system connects hundreds of rural and isolated communities within the State and is a critical piece of the state and federal transportation system; and

WHEREAS, The Bypass Mail System is like a four-legged stool designed to:

- (1) provide the most affordable means of delivering food and everyday necessities to rural and isolated communities;

- (2) establish a system whereby the USPS can meet its obligations to deliver mail to every house and business in America;
- (3) support affordable and reliable passenger service; and
- (4) support affordable and reliable non-mail freight service

WHEREAS, The USPS states it operates the current Bypass Mail System at a 70 million dollar annual deficit (100 million in cost, 30 million in bypass postage); and

WHEREAS, Without the Bypass Mail System it would be difficult and more expensive for the USPS to meet its obligation of delivering mail to every house and business in Alaska and food, medicine, freight and everyday necessities and passenger service for these rural and isolated communities would cost several times the current level; and

WHEREAS, As long as the federal government continues to own large tracts of land within the State of Alaska and limits the ability to construct roads across these lands to connect isolated communities, it is in the best interest of the USPS, the residents of Alaska and the nation:

- (1) to ensure the Intra-Alaska Bypass Mail System remains strong, viable and affordable for the USPS
- (2) to ensure residents of rural and isolated communities in Alaska continue to have affordable, reliable and safe passenger service
- (3) to ensure residents of rural and isolated communities in Alaska continue to have affordable, reliable and safe non-mail freight service

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Governor create a task force including selected members of the Rural Sub-Cabinet to examine and develop a strategy to address the impacts from the USPS hub expansion declarations and potential changes to the USPS Bypass Mail System.

Signed: Lee M. Ryan Date: 14 APRIL 2011
Lee M. Ryan, Chair