

## 9/10/2003 Moran Works for Rural Aviation Service

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Supports Legislation to Restore Funding for Essential Air Service Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today supported legislation to restore funding for the Essential Air Service (EAS) program, which preserves air service to and from smaller communities. Funding for the program was included in the annual funding bill for the Department of Transportation.

"Airports in rural communities across the country are feeling the strain in the aviation industry and we should not eliminate the federal assistance," Moran said "The EAS program helps keep air service in smaller communities and keep small airports a part of the local economy."

One provision that was considered would have cut funding for the program in half. Moran and other supporters of the program were successful in restoring the full funding.

Earlier this year, Moran introduced legislation that would make improvements and increase overall funding for the program. Many of those provisions are included in the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration, which the House will consider later this month. In addition to increasing funding in the future, Moran's legislation would encourage improved EAS marketing to increase customer traffic, as well as allowing more local control over how a community can use EAS funding.

Established in 1978, the EAS program now serves over 120 communities across the U.S. including Dodge City, Garden City, Great Bend, Hays, Liberal and Salina, in Kansas. However, due to the terrorist attacks of September 11th and the war in Iraq, the financial condition of airlines serving these communities has deteriorated. The downturn in the industry has also contributed to the rising costs of the EAS program as previously unsubsidized communities have opted into the program in order to retain scheduled air service.

"This restored funding will provide these six Kansas airports with the opportunity to maintain their operations," Moran concluded.

Moran is a member of the U.S. House Transportation Subcommittee on Aviation.

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