Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 20, 2007

The Honorable Mary Peters
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madame Secretary:

We are writing you in support of the joint application filed by SkyTeam Alliance partners Northwest, Delta, Air France, Alitalia, CSA Czech and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines for antitrust immunity among the six carriers. Antitrust immunity is an important step to allow the carriers to fully implement their alliance relationship across the Atlantic. We urge you to expeditiously review the application and grant antitrust immunity.

Northwest's existing immunized alliance with KLM has contributed substantially to the number of international flights offered at Detroit Metropolitan Airport. The expansion of the SkyTeam immunized alliance to include Air France and Delta will further increase opportunities for transatlantic service from the Detroit hub and facilitate international travel for our constituents across the state. Each new additional international flight adds millions of dollars to the Michigan economy and helps to sustain jobs. The airport's total economic impact to the region is approximately $5 billion annually. We want to preserve and promote this economic engine for our state.

The Department has routinely granted antitrust immunity to airlines with open skies partners. The new US - EU aviation agreement provides an open skies framework over the transatlantic and will spur increased service. As detailed in Northwest's application, a more integrated SkyTeam alliance offers substantial advantages to consumers including improved flight schedules, reduced travel times, new service and lower fares.

The grant of immunity will enable Northwest and its partners to build on the success of Northwest's World Gateway in Detroit which was designed as a state-of-the-art international facility . We urge you to approve this application as it will enhance benefits of the existing alliances by allowing the six carriers to fully coordinate their international business, which would not be possible without the protection of antitrust immunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senator ~~Debbie~~ Stabenow

Senator Carl Levin

