United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 1, 2004

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary, Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing you in support of the joint application filed by Air France, Delta, Alitalia, CSA Czech, Northwest and KLM for global antitrust immunity among the six carriers. Antitrust immunity is an important step to allow the carriers to fully implement their alliance relationships across the Atlantic. We hope you will expeditiously review the application and grant antitrust immunity.

Northwest and KLM already operate a joint venture alliance immunized from antitrust regulation, and Air France, Alitalia, CSA and Delta are immunized members of the SkyTeam alliance. One year ago, Air France and KLM entered into a merger transaction – a significant step in the evolutionary process of global aviation. The antitrust immunity filing is a logical consequence of the Air France-KLM merger. The six-carrier (Air France, KLM, NWA, Delta, Czech CSA and Alitalia) application seeks to bridge the antitrust immunity among Air France and KLM with their existing U.S. and European partners operating under U.S. antitrust immunity.

It is our understanding that the Department of Transportation has routinely granted antitrust immunity to airlines with open skies partners. Because this agreement is comparable to those the Department has approved and immunized in other proceedings, we hope you will approve this application as it will enhance the benefits of the existing alliances by allowing the six carriers to fully coordinate and integrate their international business as a single joint venture which would not be fully possible without the protection of antitrust immunity.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Debbie Stabenow

Carl Levin