



The Greater
San Antonio
Chamber of

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momentum
insight
problem solving
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military
innovation
small business
moving forward
stronger together

May 28, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the nearly 1800 members of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, please accept this letter of strong support for American Airlines' application for beyond-perimeter slot exemptions between San Antonio International Airport (SAT) and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) to allow for a daily nonstop roundtrip flight between the two airports. The business community of San Antonio is grateful American Airlines recognizes the urgent need and economic opportunity that this route offers our fast-growing city.

SAT serves a regional population of more than 5.2 million people, yet San Antonio is among the largest markets in the United States lacking direct service to DCA. Our community is known as Military City USA and is home to the largest and most diverse joint base in the US Department of Defense with 266 mission partners and an over \$39 billion impact locally. Joint Base San Antonio employs 88,822 active-duty members, civilian employees, and contractors. Defense and national security officials depend on the critical link between San Antonio and Washington, DC for planning and executing ongoing operations. Further, the Greater Chamber also leads a local delegation of hundreds of business and civic leaders on an annual trip to Washington, DC each year – SA to DC. A wide range of industry professions have business and policy concerns in Washington, DC and would benefit from easier access to the DCA airport.

Nonstop service by American would increase competition for Texas consumers by adding a new carrier flying from SAT directly to a third different airport in the DC/Maryland/Virginia region and providing connectivity to numerous other airports in the Northeast United States via American's hub at DCA. Based on the number of daily passengers currently traveling each way between the two airports on indirect

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routes in the absence of nonstop service, DCA is one of the largest unserved markets from SAT. With SAT currently undertaking a major terminal expansion, of which the FAA and federal government are active partners, there has never been a better time to add direct DCA service to complement the existing robust service provided by American Airlines at the airport.

Connecting Military City USA® with our nation's capital through a direct flight to DCA is long overdue. We strongly support American Airlines' application for nonstop SAT-DCA service, and we appreciate your full and fair consideration of their application. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeff Webster
President/CEO
Greater San Antonio Chamber