



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

DEC 5 2014

Office of the Associate Administrator
for Airports

800 Independence Ave., SW.
Washington, DC 20591

Ms. Cathy Sasser Helms
191 Ogle Road
Rockmart, GA 30153

Dear Ms. Helms:

Secretary Foxx asked me to respond to your November 11 letter, cosigned by your colleagues, expressing concern with efforts to accommodate commercial air service at Paulding Northwest Atlanta Airport (PUJ).

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is working with the Paulding County Board of Commissioners and the Paulding County Airport Authority, as well as other stakeholders, to address the issues you identified in your letter.

The decision to pursue airport expansion rests with the airport sponsor who must consider the interests of both aeronautical users and the local community. After an air carrier expressed interest in PUJ, the airport sponsor initiated the appropriate steps to consider accommodating this request. This included initiating a request for an Airport Operating Certificate to allow commercial service. The FAA must consider such requests if "The applicant provides written documentation that air carrier service will begin on a date certain." (Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations, part 139, §139.107.)

Currently, an environmental assessment (EA) is being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA will assess the environmental impacts associated with airfield and airspace changes necessary to accommodate commercial service at PUJ. The environmental review must be completed (and FAA would have to make a final decision on the application) before the airport or FAA could implement any proposed changes. Public participation is an integral part of the environmental process.

I assure you and the others who signed your letter that FAA will not issue the Airport Operating Certificate or approve any of the connected actions addressed in the EA unless and until the environmental analysis is completed and supports an affirmative decision.

I trust this information is helpful. Please share this response with the cosigners of your letter.

Sincerely,

Eduardo A. Angeles
Associate Administrator
for Airports