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DOLE HELPS CITY OF LIBERAL RETAIN WICHITA AIR SERVICE

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today announced that his efforts to help the City of Liberal retain air service to Wichita have been successful.

Since a Civil Aeronautics Board decision in October, 1984, Air Midwest Inc. of Wichita has not been required to provide air service between Liberal and Wichita. The '84 decision, however, did require Air Midwest to provide air service to and from Denver's Stapleton Airport as part of its "essential air service" requirements.

Since 1984 Air Midwest has been providing service between Liberal and Wichita at its own discretion. Last Thursday Mayor Don Jones, Finance Director Craig Simons, and City Manager Alan Morris of Liberal met with Air Midwest officials in Wichita. Spokesmen for Air Midwest informed the Liberal officials that they would no longer be providing daily air service to and from Wichita since the flights were no longer profitable for the company. Air Midwest did, however, offer to provide two daily flights between Liberal and Wichita if the number of required flights to Denver could be reduced.

Alan Morris, City Manager, notified Dole's Wichita office Friday of the planned termination of service to Wichita. Senator Dole immediately contacted Department of Transportation officials regarding the problem and, per the City of Liberal's request, asked DOT to approve two daily flights to and from the City of Wichita as part of the Department's "essential air service" requirement for the City of Liberal. This, in effect, allows Air Midwest to split its number of required flights to and from Liberal between the cities of Wichita and Denver. DOT officials agreed to the compromise and notified Air Midwest and the City of Liberal on Friday afternoon.

"I am most gratified that I have been able to assist the City of Liberal in securing air service for the approximately 2,600 passengers who travel from Liberal to Wichita each year. I am certain that the many Wichita passengers traveling to Liberal throughout the year will appreciate the retention of this service as well, *Dole said.*