

ROBERT F. BENNETT
UTAH

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
JOINT ECONOMIC

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4403
(202) 224-5444

June 11, 2009

STATE OFFICES:

- WALLACE BENNETT FEDERAL BUILDING
125 SOUTH STATE, SUITE 4225
SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84138-1188
(801) 524-5933
- JAMES V. HANSEN FEDERAL BUILDING
324 25TH STREET, SUITE 1410
OGDEN, UT 84401-2310
(801) 625-5676
- OLD COURT HOUSE BUILDING
51 SOUTH UNIVERSITY AVENUE, SUITE 310
PROVO, UT 84601-4424
(801) 851-2525
- FEDERAL BUILDING
196 EAST TABERNACLE, SUITE 21
ST. GEORGE, UT 84770-3474
(435) 628-5514
- 77 NORTH MAIN, SUITE 113
P.O. BOX 1326
CEDAR CITY, UT 84721
(435) 865-1335

The Honorable Randy Babbitt
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 1010
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Babbitt:

It has come to our attention that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) intends to implement an upgrade to the legacy Radar and Flight Data processing equipment, referred to as "Host", at the Salt Lake Air Route Traffic Control Center. As you know, the new system, En Route Automation Modernization (ERAM), will be an important technical upgrade and will be responsible for processing all of the critical flight safety data for the Intermountain West. It is our understanding that the original launch date of June 13, 2009, has been pushed back to the night of June 17, 2009, because of some concerns with the system and its readiness to handle the complete air traffic load.

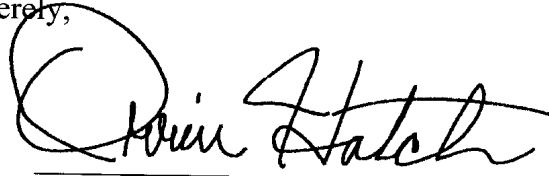
We appreciate the effort have made to ensure the system is prepared. It has been reported to us, however, that several concerns may remain unresolved. One example cited was that systems engineers are still unable to receive all of the critical error reports necessary to maintain and control the hardware and software. The can cause air traffic controllers to frequently lose the flight plan data of aircraft under their control – an outcome that is simply unacceptable.

After meeting with representatives from the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, it appears that many controllers still have serious concerns with the stability of the system, which may, in turn, jeopardize the safety of the flying public upon implementation. Safety concerns demand that ERAM not be implemented until it meets and exceeds the standards of reliability and stability of the system it replaces. Therefore, we respectfully request that you further examine the implementation of the ERAM system and delay implementation until an acceptable level of reliability and stability is maintained and verified.

Sincerely,



Robert F. Bennett
United States Senator



Orrin G. Hatch
United States Senator