

RE: Watertown SD EAS Service

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Angie Yahne and I live and work in Watertown SD. I have previously worked for SkyWest when they serviced Watertown SD when they won the bid a few years prior to Denver Air Connection taking over. I am writing this to express my concern towards the city recommendation of going with SkyWest this bid cycle. As a former employee of SkyWest, I reviewed the bid materials thoroughly and there are several inaccuracies. I will refer to the below chart sent in with SkyWest bid.

CODESHARE ADVANTAGE		
	CODESHARE	INTERLINE
Full Itinerary on Single Ticket for Connecting Flights in Denver	✓	✗
MileagePlus® Miles Accrued for all Flights	✓	✗
Auto Bag Transfer on Connecting Flights in Denver	✓	✗
Pricing Advantage – Especially when flying International	✓	✗
Irregular Operations (IROP) Protection	✓	✗
Gate Proximity to Partner Departures – UA Ground handled	✓	✗
Amenities - Lounge Access and Travel Support	✓	✗

I will start with the first bullet point, “Full itinerary on single ticket for connecting flights in Denver”. It shows interline does not have this but that is false. Denver Air has the option to book through united and several other sites like Expedia for your full itinerary NOT JUST a single ticket. Number two for inaccuracies, “Auto bag transfer on connecting flights in Denver”. It shows interline does not do this, but this is also false, Denver air currently transfers bags to other carriers regularly as they have interline agreements with United, Delta, American. Number three, “Irregular operations protection”. Nobody has IRROP protection, so I am not sure how this even applies. Number four, “Gate proximity to partner departures- UA ground handled”. Both Denver Air and SkyWest are located at the farthest point of gates A and C in Denver. They are in similar situations whether they are code share or interline. Number five, “Amenities- Lounge access and travel support”. Unless someone is traveling in First Class on United, they do not have access unless they pay for it. Some of those with status on united may have access but regular economy flyers do not get this privilege.

Additionally, I am afraid that with SkyWest trying to move to a Part 135 operation, (which they clearly outlined they are not under that currently in their proposal) eventually they will force EAS airports to move to 30 seat planes, that are not big enough to support our clientele in Watertown sd. This is a huge concern for me as they are not telling airports their plans and I can only speculate at this point with the administration change that there is a possibility they will be approved to operate as part 135. The regulations for Part 135 are much less stringent and I worry about safety as well as a lower passenger count since there are 20 fewer seats per flight. This photo below was pulled from their bid.

TOP FAA PART 121 OPERATOR

	PART 121	PART 135
Two Air Transport Pilots in Flight Deck	✓	✗
Active Flight Dispatching	✓	✗
FAR Part 117 Rest Rules	✓	✗
Safety Management Systems	✓	✗
Advanced Qualification Program (AQP) Training	✓	✗

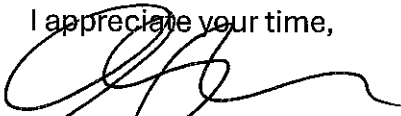
Another point to make is that the community overwhelmingly supports Denver Air Connection. I have a link to a Facebook post that shows this as well.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/18iVKR5cDL/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

Another concern is that just a couple years ago SkyWest dropped 29 cities from their routing and a majority were EAS stations. There is just too much uncertainty surrounding SkyWest's plans moving forward, following what happened to so many communities in the recent past. Many of those communities SkyWest abandoned still do not have functional air service. I would hate for Watertown to find itself in that position.

In conclusion, I am wondering if I can propose this option. The facts are that SkyWest was the lowest bid. However, if you do the math, year 3 and 4 is where it gets expensive because of all the unknowns. If the DOT did a 2-year award to Denver Air Connection the difference in pricing would only be \$345,000 with SkyWest only being slightly lower. Can the DOT simply award a two-year term, which would cut the difference in the proposals to about \$173,000 per year? Thinking from a business standpoint, why fix what isn't broken? They are doing great work in our community and there would be zero interruption issues if we kept Denver Air. It could then be rebid for the subsequent two years.

I appreciate your time,



Angie Yahne
Watertown SD