



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

September 29, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

This responds to your letter, dated July 8, 2009, regarding the competitive implications of international airline alliances and the importance of antitrust enforcement in the airline industry. We appreciate having the benefit of your perspective regarding the Star Alliance antitrust immunity application. Assistant Attorney General Varney also expresses her thanks for the opportunity to have met with you at your request to discuss how the Department and Congress can work together to ensure competition in international aviation.

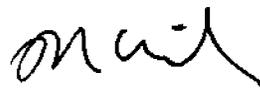
The Department's Antitrust Division takes its role in preserving competition in all industries, including aviation, extremely seriously. As you note in your letter, additional alliance applications are pending at the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Department is in the process of analyzing their competitive implications. We look forward to working cooperatively with DOT on those applications to protect competition and consumer benefits for air travelers.

As you know, the Administration is carefully studying your legislation but has not yet taken a position on it.

Thank you for your interest in and support of antitrust enforcement. Please do not hesitate to contact this office if you would like assistance regarding any other matter.

The Office of Management and Budget has advised us that there is no objection to the submission of this letter from the perspective of the Administration's program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald Weich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ronald" being more prominent than the last name "Weich".

Ronald Weich
Assistant Attorney General