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August 19, 1999

Federal Aviation Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street SW, Room Plaza 401
Washington, DC 20509

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to express the concerns of the Arizona Office of Tourism with the FAA's proposed rulemaking regarding Limitations on Commercial Air Tours and Modifications of Flight Free Zones in Grand Canyon National Park.

The existing regulations governing overflights have provided for the enjoyment of this great natural wonder in this special fashion, which the dramatic reduction in complaints about noise levels proves to be well founded. Furthermore, for disabled citizens, as well as seniors and others in need of special services, a true enjoyment of the full majesty of the Canyon is only accessible through these air tours. Research shows that virtually half of air tour passengers are doing so because of health issues or physical limitations.

The Arizona Office of Tourism cites these key factors as well as the various salient points contained in the letter to the issue submitted by Governor Jane Dee Hull at the public hearing in Flagstaff on August 17, 1999 (copy attached) as reason for our position that since the existing rules are proving to be effective, the changes proposed are opposed because they create hardship for both a significant portion of Canyon visitors, as well as for the operators and employees of the air tour companies.

Sincerely,

Mark McDermott
Director