March 25, 1969

Dear:

Thank you for your communication reflecting your support for S. 1026, the Air Traffic Controller bill.

This bill is currently pending before the Senate Commerce Committee. If and when it reaches the Senate floor, you can be sure I will give it good attention and will keep your views in mind.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen
This is to acknowledge your recent communication regarding the air traffic control problem.

The importance of resolving the current differences in order to prevent a crisis of much greater magnitude cannot be underestimated. I fully understand the concern expressed by the controllers, and I am mindful of the position of the Federal Aviation Administration. From 1963 through 1967 only seventy controllers were added to the existing group. Indeed, this was a totally unrealistic figure. The FAA has made a budget request for 2900 additional controllers in Fiscal Year 1970. The formation by the Department of Transportation of a panel to review the problems and make appropriate recommendations is an additional step in the right direction. I am also confident that the interests of the traffic controllers will be given priority consideration in reaching a feasible solution in the current negotiations between the FAA and the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization.

I am giving the matter my close attention. The benefit of your thinking is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Everett McKinley Dirksen