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**Commissioning of the David J. Hurley Air Traffic Control  
System Command Center  
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Good afternoon, I'm truly delighted to be part of today's program. I had the opportunity to take a tour of the Command Center earlier and it's magnificent. It will serve our nation well both as a 'nerve center' for ensuring the safe operation of thousands of flights a day and as a powerful enabler of the Next Generation Air Transportation System.

One of the things I'm struck by is how the Command Center pulls the National Airspace System together. I used the words 'nerve center' earlier – perhaps 'brain' is a better word choice.

In a collaborative, real-time environment, all the parties that make the system tick – controllers, operators, the military, industry partners – work seamlessly together 24/7/ 365. They manage the flow of air traffic across the country using shared live data to make critical

decisions, when weather, equipment, runway closures or sometime the threatening and unexpected place stress on the National Airspace System.

When NextGen comes online, the Command Center will be the place where all of the technology comes together and is orchestrated, facilitating NextGen advancements across the entire national airspace system.

As Administrator, whenever I had a foreign visitor or the opportunity to visit international air traffic centers, I never failed to talk about our operation here in Virginia and often showed our foreign visitors around. It was uniquely developed here in the U.S. and path breaking, as command centers in places as far flung as Australia, South Africa are testament to. The Command Center is a hallmark of how we do business and operate the largest, most complex and safest aviation system in the world. And this new center will have a whole new suite of technologies on this lovely campus to make it an even more effective part of our National Airspace System.

I think this center is the embodiment of the technological leadership that we have in aerospace. Innovation and technology are what renews and fuels the industry and helps us advance our competitive edge. It's an asset, however, we can't take for granted. We've got to nurture and protect it.

As I look across the industry, I see many examples of innovation starting right here with NextGen – truly a language of innovation. AIRE, SWIM, ADS-B, ERAM, 4DT, PBN, RNP and

DataCom. They're more than familiar acronyms, they're the NextGen programs and technologies that allow our industry to stretch its legs and transform the global air traffic management system. And when they are all in place, visitors to this facility will see collaborative decision making, real time traffic flow management like it has never been seen before.

So, I just want to say again how pleased I am to be here and how great it is to see the aviation industry out in full force. Thanks also to today's sponsors and co-hosts. In addition to the organization I represent – the Aerospace Industries Association – our hosts today include ACI, AIAA, Committee for Dulles, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, NATCA, NBAA, Mitre, the Virginia Department of Aviation, and, of course, the Washington Airports Task Force.

Please indulge me for a moment to publicly thank all of these organizations – not only for the representing their constituencies so well, but also for representing aviation so well. Our organizations don't always agree on everything, but we share a common goal – the development and sustainment of the safest and most productive civil aviation industry in the world. This Command Center is a testament to that fact.

It's very rewarding to be part of today's commissioning and to be part of this community. Thank you for the opportunity to say so.