

STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE JERRY F. COSTELLO
AVIATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT: EMISSIONS
MAY 6, 2008

- I want to welcome everyone to our Subcommittee hearing on Aviation and the Environment: Emissions.

- Globally, commercial aviation accounts for almost 3 percent of emissions. And with one billion passengers expected to fly in the U.S. by 2016, we need to responsibly manage aircraft emissions.

- Here at home and across the globe, more is being done to reduce energy consumption and emissions. Airlines, airports, manufacturers and the Air Force are at the forefront of developing better planes, technology and operating procedures to conserve fuel and reduce emissions.

- They are a perfect example of how improvements are driven by necessity, as fuel costs are the largest single expenditure for the airlines, accounting for 40% or more of their total expenditures.

- In the last month, fuel has greatly affected the aviation industry, causing four carriers to file bankruptcy and other carriers reducing capacity. Every penny in the price of a gallon of jet fuel results in an additional \$195 million in annual fuel costs for the US airline industry.

- To combat this, aircraft fuel efficiency has improved by almost 31 percent since 1990. On April 22, 2008, ATA committed to work towards an additional 30 percent fuel efficiency improvement by 2025.

- Research also continues in engine efficiency, airframe aerodynamics, and the use of lighter materials, like composites currently used on the Boeing 787.

- Implementation of NextGen will also have positive impacts on the environment including fuel efficient operating procedures, the introduction of new airframe and engine technologies and developing alternative fuels. This is another reason why I am supportive of moving forward on modernizing our air traffic control system and continue to urge the FAA to produce and meet its timeline and milestones for modernizing our system.

- I am pleased to see that Boeing completed its first biofuels flight with Virgin America earlier this year and is working on fuel cells for future aircraft.

- I am also interested in hearing more about coal to liquids (CTL) technology and the benefits it brings to this discussion. I have long been a supporter of clean coal technologies. The state of Illinois is rich in coal and the United States has a 250-year supply of coal in the ground that we continue to use for half of our electricity production.

- Given that CTL fuels can be used in existing planes and engines without degradation in performance, and that they can help reduce our reliance on foreign sources of oil, I believe that CTL production should be pursued.

- Further, airports are facing significant challenges to increase capacity while also managing the environmental impacts on local communities. Many airports are putting resources into

infrastructure for natural gas, solar, electric, biofuels and propane refueling stations that benefit the airport and many public users such as commercial vans, courtesy shuttles and taxis. I am interested in hearing more from SEA-TAC on its recycling program and its greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

- Under H.R. 2881, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2007, which passed the House of Representatives September 20, 2007, we provide historic levels of funding to upgrade our air traffic control system to improve efficiency and invest in aviation research. Other programs to reduce our carbon footprint in H.R. 2881 include the CLEEN Engine and Airframe Technology Partnership and the Green Towers Program which was modeled after what is currently being done at O'Hare International Airport.

- We continue to wait on Senate action on this legislation so we can proceed to conference.

- Finally, the European Union has proposed an Emissions Trading Scheme to reduce emissions. Due to the global nature of aviation, I strongly believe any effort to reduce emissions should be done by consensus through ICAO and must maintain economic growth while reducing emissions.

- With that, again I welcome our witnesses and look forward to their testimony.

- Before I recognize Mr. Petri for his opening statement, I ask unanimous consent to allow 2 weeks for all Members to revise and extend their remarks and to permit the submission

of additional statements and materials by Members and witnesses. Without objection, so ordered.