

For Immediate Release  
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**Mayor Daley Accepts \$300 Million Federal Grant for O'Hare Modernization Program  
Calls Airport Vital Part of Regional and National Economy**

Mayor Richard M. Daley today thanked Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta for granting the City's request of \$300 million in federal discretionary funds to help finance the O'Hare Modernization Program.

"The Federal Aviation Administration, the U.S. Department of Transportation and 14 other state and federal agencies have now approved every facet of the O'Hare Modernization Program," Daley said at an airport ceremony. "They've approved it from the standpoint of safety, efficiency, costs, benefits and the environment.

"And by making this substantial financial investment, the federal government is stating loudly and clearly that the O'Hare Modernization Program is vitally important to the nation's aviation system."

The Mayor added: "O'Hare is the heart of the nation's air transportation system and a vital part of our national economy -- an economy that depends on getting people and products to their destinations as rapidly and efficiently as possible.

"If the U.S. intends to retain its world economic leadership -- and we do -- then we have to make sure that our transportation infrastructure is up to date. And that starts with O'Hare International Airport -- because it's the aviation center not just of the nation, but of the entire Northern Hemisphere. And it hasn't added a runway for more than 30 years, while the amount of air travel in this nation has doubled."

The program calls for reconfiguring O'Hare's outdated intersecting runway system into a modern, parallel runway configuration, substantially reducing delays and increasing capacity. No state or local tax dollars will be used to fund the OMP, which is expected to cost \$6.6 billion in 2001 dollars.

The project is expected to create between 50,000 and 195,000 jobs on top of the 450,000 jobs currently supported by the City's airport system. It will generate up to \$18 billion a year in economic activity on top of the \$38 billion O'Hare generates today, and will save the airlines and their passengers an estimated \$750 million a year through reduced delays.

"A modern, efficient O'Hare airport will be welcomed not just by residents of the Chicago area, but also by the man in Toledo who needs to get to Los Angeles and the woman in Des Moines with business interests in London," Daley said. "The whole nation benefits when there are more flights and fewer delays at its major connecting airport. People get to spend more time doing what they want to do -- running their businesses or being with their families -- and less time sitting in airplanes and airports."

Daley thanked Mineta, Senators Dick Durbin and Barack Obama, House Speaker Dennis Hastert and the members of the Illinois congressional delegation; Gov. Rod Blagojevich and the members of the Illinois General Assembly; the members of the Chicago City Council and its Aviation Committee; and United, American and the other O'Hare airlines that made a commitment to help fund this project two years ago.