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***Growth and Progress Continues as
Gary/Chicago International Airport Celebrates
New Permanent U.S. Customs Facility***

(GARY, Ind. – August 8, 2018) – More than 100 business, aviation and community leaders and elected officials from around the region - including U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly and City of Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson - participated in a grand opening celebration today for a new, permanent General Aviation U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facility at the Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYY).

With the opening of this new customs facility, airport users can now fly into Gary from any destination in the world without having to stop elsewhere to clear customs.

“The grand opening of the new general aviation customs facility opens the door to a whole new international market and services for the airport and its users. There’s a lot of momentum at our backs, and we are excited about the continued growth of the airport and opportunities Customs at the airport will bring,” said **GYA Authority Chairman Tim Fesko**.

This is GYY’s latest service enhancement and another affirmation of the airport’s position as the region’s premier mid-sized airport. Since the airport extended the runway in 2015 to nearly 8,900 feet - giving GYY the second longest runway in the region after O’Hare - operations are up by more than 15 percent, fuel flowage revenue is up 82 percent and revenue from landing fees is up by more than 140 percent.

“This new customs facility is a significant upgrade for the Gary/Chicago International Airport and for the City of Gary, allowing for international passenger to fly directly into northwest Indiana. I was proud to work with Mayor Freeman-Wilson and other local stakeholders to clear all the obstacles needed to extend the airport’s runway, which helped the airport move forward with its expansion plans and paved the way for this new facility. I am optimistic these infrastructure improvements will further boost the region’s economy and create local jobs,” said **U.S. Senator Joe Donnelly**.

Under the direction of the GYY Authority Board, the project’s construction manager, Lee Companies of Gary, Indiana set aggressive minimum local hiring requirements for construction of the new CBP facility – and they far exceeded those requirements. In all, the project invested over \$1 million in the airport, providing 79 construction jobs. 74 percent of the workers hired reside in Lake or Porter counties, and 37 percent of all construction contracts were awarded to companies with an existing presence in the City of Gary.

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Gary/Chicago International Airport Celebrates New Permanent U.S. Customs Facility (cont.)

“The Gary/Chicago International Airport is an economic engine, and this new customs facility reaffirms that. The new facility also honors the financial commitment of Airport tenants: Boeing, the Gary Jet Center, B. Coleman Aviation and Sage-Popovich. I would like to congratulate Airport Chairman Tim Fesko, as well as former Chairman Steve Mays, Airport Director Duane Hayden, former Director Dan Vicari, and the entire construction project team. As we continue to invest in the airport’s aviation developments, we continue to reassert ourselves as a premier mid-size airport. The City of Gary looks forward to witnessing the airport’s continued transformation and success,” added **Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson**.

The addition of the U.S. Customs and Border facility is the latest investment and major service enhancement in a series of capital improvements at the airport. These improvements have included:

- Gary Jet Center opens a new \$5 million LEED-certified hangar (2014)
- B. Coleman opens a new \$9 million state-of-the-art terminal and flight support facility (2014)
- GYY completes extension of the main runway from 7,000 to 8,859 feet (2015)
- B. Coleman announces 7-year year, up to \$20 million expansion plans (2016)
- Gary Jet Center opens new \$3 million terminal and administrative offices (2017)
- B. Coleman opens new \$5 million 40,000 square foot hangar (2017)
- GYY Authority Board approves construction of new \$2.5 million East Corporate Hangar (2018)
- Updated Master Planning process launches (expected completion in 2018)

“It is great to be a part of this celebratory day. This onsite CBP facility will allow our FBO customers to arrive directly from international locations and continues to prove that the Gary Chicago International Airport is becoming the business aviation airport of choice in the Chicago area,” stated **B. Coleman Aviation President John Girzadas**.

During these airport enhancements, GYY has also partnered with local, state and federal partners to rehabilitate Airport Road, remove unnecessary rail line and bridges, and improve airport overall infrastructure.

“This new customs facility further improves our ability to compete with other major airports, while also enhancing our marketability to the corporate and general aviation community,” added **Gary Jet Center President Lynn Eplawy**.

The new U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility is anticipated to open within the next month. You can find more information on the facility, as well as the airport and the other services offered, at www.FlyGYY.com.

About Gary/Chicago International Airport

Located minutes from the shores of Lake Michigan and just 25 miles from downtown Chicago, Gary/Chicago International Airport (GYY) is a full-service airport and a premiere destination for corporate and weekend flyers in the Chicago metropolitan region and Northwest Indiana. To learn more, visit the airport’s new website at FlyGYY.com.

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