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DOLE, KASSEBAUM PUSH K.C. AS REGIONAL FAA HEADQUARTERS

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senators Bob Dole and Nancy Kassebaum, in a telegram today to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Lynn Helms, called upon the FAA to re-affirm its earlier decision to locate its consolidated Central-Great Plains regional office in Kansas City.

In June, the agency announced its intention to locate the office in Kansas City, currently the site of a regional office. However, recent speculation indicates that Helms may be in the process of reconsidering this initial decision.

Dole and Kassebaum pointed to the waste and increased cost that a move to Chicago would create.

"The regional office must be located close to Wichita, where 99 percent of all small aircraft are manufactured, as certification of all stages of the manufacturing process is required by FAA engineers based in the regional office," they said. "The Kansas City FAA office has been the lead office for certification of small aircraft and will continue to be so due to its proximity to Wichita.

"Locating the regional office in Chicago rather than Kansas City will result in additional waste and increased cost to the federal government. The one-time implementation cost of a move to Kansas City is less than a move to Chicago, as fewer employees and less equipment needs to be moved. Additionally, automatic data processing equipment already is installed and working in Kansas City."

The senators estimate that a one-time move to Kansas City would cost \$5 million, as opposed to \$6 million for Chicago. It would involve the relocation of 300 employees to the Kansas City area.