



**Opening Statement of Chairman Sam Graves
House Committee on Small Business
Hearing: “FAA’s 2020 NextGen Mandate: Benefits and Challenges for General Aviation”
June 11, 2014**

Good Afternoon. This hearing will come to order.

Today, the Committee will examine the FAA’s 2020 NextGen mandate, and how it will affect small businesses in the general aviation community.

General aviation includes about 360,000 aircraft carrying 166 million passengers to 5,000 public airports in the U.S., many of which have no scheduled commercial air service. More than two-thirds of these 25 million flight hours per year are for business purposes. In addition to more than 2,500 small businesses that provide air transport services, general aviation employs about 1.2 million people and contributes approximately \$150 billion to the overall GDP.

The NextGen initiative is a project of the Federal Aviation Administration designed to modernize the United States’ aviation system by using satellite-based and digital technologies to make air travel more predictable, convenient, safe and reliable. At a time when many airports in the United States experience high levels of congestion and safety concerns are prevalent, the NextGen initiative offers positive solutions.

As part of NextGen, the FAA is mandating that by January 1, 2020, all aircraft operating in most controlled airspace be equipped with technology systems that are capable of broadcasting continuous, precise positional information to ground stations and other aircraft. This technology is known as Automatic Dependence Surveillance-Broadcast Out, or ADS-B Out. Despite the deadline, the general aviation community estimates that so far, only a few thousand out of more than 150,000 general aviation aircraft that will be required to equip with the new technology have done so. It seems that cost, a potential installation backlog, and uncertainty surrounding the mandate are creating obstacles to compliance among the general aviation industry. It is important to address these challenges if we are to reap the potential safety benefits that this new technology offers.

We are fortunate to have with us today the Administrator of the FAA, as well as a group of general aviation industry representatives and businesses who will be affected by the mandate. We look forward to hearing their perspective regarding the NextGen mandate, its economic impact on the general aviation community and solutions to accelerate and make possible widespread adoption.

I would like to thank our distinguished witnesses for being here today and I now recognize the Ranking Member for her opening statement.