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HAI’s Matt Zuccaro Testifies Before Senate Committee
On UAS Integration into National Airspace System

Alexandria, VA (May 8, 2018) – Helicopter Association International (HAI) applauds Chairman Roy Blunt and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell of the Senate Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security for their leadership in engaging stakeholders on the important issue of safely integrating unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) into the National Airspace System (NAS).

“We commend Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Cantwell for holding this hearing today,” said Matthew Zuccaro, president, and CEO of HAI. “The integration of unmanned operations and technology into the NAS is an exciting watershed moment. The potential benefits are only limited by our imagination. But along with such excitement and optimism, we must also take on the responsibility of making this integration safe, which requires all stakeholders to work together to ensure success.”

Zuccaro, testifying at the May 8 hearing on behalf of HAI and the civil helicopter industry, noted five important topics relating to the safe integration of UAS:

- The importance of the FAA preemption authority
- Ensuring safe access to the NAS for all aircraft
- The criticality of ensuring the safety of UAS operations that occur beyond the visual line of sight of the pilot or operator
- The necessity of establishing training and certification standards for UAS operations
- The need for a nimble certification system for UAS.

Zuccaro also noted that HAI advocates that Congress approve legislation that addresses the Section 336 exemption of the FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012, which prohibited the FAA from regulating private, recreational UAS users. HAI advocates for returning to the FAA full and singular regulatory authority over US civil aviation, including all manned and unmanned operations.

“HAI is fully engaged in promoting the safe integration of UAS into the NAS,” continues Zuccaro. “Helicopter operators were early supporters of UAS technology, and we see it as a new business opportunity for our industry. HAI’s members have been and will remain heavily engaged in unmanned operations in the coming years. Many have established UAS business lines within their organizations.”
“HAI thanks the Chairman and Ranking Member for their leadership and commitment to general aviation. By ensuring that Congress fully address the safety issues related to integration, our industry and others can utilize UAS to their full potential within the NAS,” said Zuccaro. HAI is committed to working with Congress and the administration in moving forward on these issues.

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HAI is the trade association for the civil helicopter industry. HAI’s 4,100 members include 2,300 individuals and 1,800 aviation businesses who operate more than 5,200 helicopters approximately 2.3 million flight hours each year in 73 nations. HAI is dedicated to the promotion of the helicopter as a safe, effective method of commerce and to the advancement of the international helicopter community.