

SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ANDREW H. CARD, JR.
HUNTSVILLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PFC ANNOUNCEMENT
MARCH 9, 1992
HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA

Event: CEREMONY ANNOUNCING PFC. 10 MINUTE REMARKS.

Thank you very much. I am delighted to be in Huntsville, the Rocket City, hometown of high technology, and an outstanding pioneer in intermodal transportation.

I've only been Secretary of Transportation a few days, and I'm pleased that Huntsville is one of my first official visits. When I look at the companies served by this airport, the high-tech companies that are the backbone of our nation's research and development, I am reminded of my native Massachusetts.

But your emphasis on intermodal transportation makes you unique. Bringing all modes of transportation together at this airport is exactly what this Administration and this Department are trying to accomplish. Here at Huntsville we find a great example of what the National Transportation Policy meant by "linking up America" and providing links to the world beyond. And I want you, Blair Conrad (Executive Director) and you, Henry Oldham (Chairman), to know that Huntsville International Airport is way out front and you have our strong and enthusiastic support.

The announcement I am making today not only strengthens the intermodal connection but assures economic growth in this part of north Alabama into the 21st century.

Huntsville is the fourth airport to receive Federal Aviation Administration authority to make improvements by using funds generated by a Passenger Facility Charge or PFC. With this PFC authority, the Huntsville-Madison County Airport Authority will raise nearly \$21 million to cover 16 projects.

These projects will enhance safety, security and capacity. They will mitigate noise impacts resulting from the airport. And they will encourage competition between and among air carriers at the airport. Thousands of good paying jobs will be created in Huntsville over the life of your development plan. And this PFC authority puts Huntsville right in step with what the President is doing on a national level -- creating jobs, strengthening the economy and improving our nation's ability to compete in the world marketplace.

Your intermodal facility moves in the same direction. You started the train-truck-plane connection in 1986. But it really came into its own when your airport officials aggressively sought and succeeded in getting international cargo service in 1990. And make no

mistake about it: this airport is and always will be the cargo gateway of the South and the lifeline of your growing tourism and convention industry.

So in a sense, air shippers are the real beneficiaries of the PFC authority. Providing more opportunity for international cargo service will cut transportation costs.

You in Huntsville were with us very early in developing the PFC. You did your homework, coming up with this master plan for improvements. The plan is excellent. You filed your application early. And you deserve the credit for leading the nation in this pro-growth initiative.

And I can assure you of this: the PFC initiative is just one of many the President has undertaken to strengthen our economy.

President Bush has made abundantly clear, no stone is being left unturned, no good idea is being ignored that can help get America back to work. Like you in Huntsville, we in Washington know very well that transportation is a vital element in moving this economy forward. As the President said "Mobility is the lifeblood of the modern economy."

Clearly, the economy is the President's number one priority. He wants you to know we are doing absolutely

everything to get state and local governments -- local authorities like the Huntsville-Madison County Airport Authority -- into a position where they can accomplish many of the things that they've set out to do.

The President has directed cabinet departments and federal agencies to speed up pro-growth expenditures as quickly as possible. This does not mean we are going to spend more money. We are just speeding up what we intended to spend anyway, giving the economy a jump start at job creation. As the President said, this speed-up should "put an extra \$10 billion dollars into the economy in the next six months."

And all signs show we are on the road to recovery. According to January figures, Americans spent more ... bought more homes ... while inflation was stable ... and manufacturing steadied.

Any one of President Bush's pro-growth initiatives will add momentum to this upswing. The creation of a new 15 percent investment tax allowance ... permitting first time home buyers to withdraw savings from I.R.A.'s without penalty ... and providing a five thousand dollar tax credit for the first purchase of that home ... all are sound common sense solutions to get America moving again.

As I said at the outset, the Massachusetts economy, not too unlike Huntsville's, is anchored in high technology. And the President's FY 1993 budget request for DOT includes a 12 percent increase for research and development over the previous year's level.

The PFC itself is a growth mechanism -- as it means an investment in America's economic present and future.

Two hundred airports, and possibly more, are expected to follow in your footsteps. When the PFC is in place around the country, \$1 billion a year could be collected for airport improvements. These funds have the potential for creating up to 40,000 good paying jobs nationwide. The resulting improvements can, in turn, further stimulate growth and create a cycle of economic boom.

The Department of Transportation will continue to provide local authorities more flexibility to move ahead on projects that will create jobs and ensure our economic future.

So in conferring this PFC authority, I am proud to have a small part in your rich heritage of transportation. Huntsville didn't really begin to grow until Redstone Arsenal became the focal point of the space program,

and growth in this city took off like a rocket and hasn't let up since.

Congratulations on this new step. DOT is prepared to make the journey with you. Now, let's get on with the job of reinvigorating our economy -- locally and nationally.

Thank you very much.

(invite Conrad and Oldham to join you at the podium for the presentation.)

#