

STATEMENT OF JAMES A. WILDING,
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for the
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION
concerning
PROPOSED AUTHORIZATION OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
TO PLAN, DESIGN, AND CONSTRUCT FACILITIES FOR
THE NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM
AT THE WASHINGTON DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
July 24, 1985

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to appear before you today, and I appreciate the opportunity to discuss S.1311, a proposal to authorize the Smithsonian Institution to lease land at the Washington Dulles International Airport for expansion of the National Air and Space Museum. As Director of the Metropolitan Washington Airports, I have the responsibility for operation and maintenance of Dulles Airport, and my staff and I will be more than pleased to provide this committee with any information about the airports that may be of assistance to you in this matter.

The proposed legislation provides that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) shall lease to the Smithsonian Institution a tract of land at Dulles not to exceed 100 acres as appropriate for the expansion of the museum.

From the Statement of Secretary Adams, you are already aware of the Smithsonian's objection on behalf of the Administration to S.1311 in its current form. I would like to confine my remarks to issues of technical compatibility of the museum concept with the ongoing and future operations of Dulles.

Of course, our first obligation is for safe operation of the airport. We think that it is necessary and proper that any bill recognize, as S.1311 does, that a museum must not interfere with the operations of Dulles, including the airport's efficient ground access and parking. On this question, we are confident that a museum of this nature, and the public that would visit it, can be accommodated at Dulles on a site that will not interfere with airport traffic, parking, or other operations. Also, FAA provides services such as police and fire protection and utilities to airport tenants today in a very cost effective manner and would be capable of doing so in this instance.

From a practical standpoint, access to the museum directly from Dulles' runways and taxiways would enable the Smithsonian to receive even the largest of aircraft in operation today and in the future without rigorous and costly overland transport.

In sum, from a technical perspective, we believe that a National Air and Space Museum could be accommodated at Dulles Airport without adversely impacting on the Dulles terminal area or airport operations. This concludes my brief statement, and I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

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