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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES 2018'S RECORD-BREAKING YEAR FOR PASSENGERS AND
FLIGHT OPERATIONS AT CHICAGO AIRPORTS**

*Chicago Serves More than 105 Million Travelers, Surpasses Atlanta as Busiest Airport in
United States in 2018*

CHICAGO—Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) today announced 2018 was another record-breaking year for O'Hare and Midway International Airports combined, with the most passengers served and highest volume of cargo tonnage handled to date. According to preliminary data from airlines, more than 105 million passengers traveled through O'Hare and Midway International Airports last year, surpassing the previous record set in 2017.

Also setting records, the total flight operations for O'Hare topped 900,000 for the first time since 2007. This is according to new data out by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which confirms Chicago-O'Hare has again surpassed Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport for most departures and arrivals in the nation.

"Chicago is proud to be the home of the best connected airport in the U.S., and now the busiest airport for total flights, as well," said Mayor Emanuel. "The record number of passengers in 2018 is a testament to the investments we are making to build Chicago's aviation future. With more people visiting Chicago every year, our modernization programs at O'Hare and Midway will keep passengers connected to our two leading gateway airports, and will fuel new opportunities for the City and the region for years to come."

O'Hare handled over 83.4 million passengers in 2018, representing a steady 4.5 percent increase over 2017 and the largest year-over-year increase since 2015. Midway served over 22 million passengers, one of its highest volume years to date. These record passenger volumes include a more than 10 percent increase in international traffic fueled largely by O'Hare. This level of growth follows the significant expansion of air services by Chicago's airline partners in recent years, with nearly 50 new domestic and international destinations added in 2018 at O'Hare and Midway combined.

“Chicago’s airports will continue breaking records, and providing safe and efficient service for our travelers day in and day out as we continue to grow,” said Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee. “Thanks to our airline partners’ commitment to Chicago, and the support of the FAA and our federal partners, O’Hare and Midway are offering increased connections, better services, and more reasons for travelers to fly to Chicago than ever before.”

Air cargo flown through Chicago also reached a new high again in 2018, with approximately 1.87 million metric tonnes handled at O’Hare. This represents a 5.7 percent increase over the previous record set by the airport in 2017. Chicago’s record-breaking air cargo is attributable to the City’s investments to increase capacity at O’Hare’s state-of-the-art Northeast Cargo Development. This \$220 million cargo development will deliver an additional 800,000 square feet of cargo processing space when all three phases are complete by 2021. O’Hare is also the number one airport in all of the Americas by cargo value, processing about \$200 billion in imports and exports every year.

Today’s preliminary traffic numbers follow on O’Hare being named best connected airport in the nation for three years running, and the second-most connected in the world after London-Heathrow in 2018. Chicago’s expanding connectivity has been detailed in reports by OAG, a leading air travel intelligence company.

Supporting Chicago’s leading global connectivity, the O’Hare Modernization Program has delivered new runways and a modern new airfield layout, with approximately 50 percent more capacity than when the program launched in 2001. Working with federal partners, including the FAA, to improve O’Hare’s airfield has resulted in more flights in and out, new routes, better connections and fewer delays for passengers at O’Hare.

Chicago’s air connectivity stands to further thrive, thanks to major modernization projects at both airports, including an \$8.5 billion plan to expand O’Hare’s terminals over the next decade. A modern new airfield sets the stage for O’Hare’s biggest terminal expansion yet, which will deliver more gates, new passenger amenities, and create new economic opportunity to support the City and its future. These investments are a part of Mayor Emanuel’s O’Hare 21 vision, designed to modernize facilities, expand terminal capacity, and enable O’Hare’s future growth to better connect travelers and Chicago to other parts of the world.

The Midway Modernization Program (MMP) is a nearly \$400 million investment in the future of Midway International Airport by the CDA and its airline partners. It’s the largest improvement program at the airport in nearly 20 years and will upgrade travelers’ experience flying from, to, or through Midway. Midway’s modernization is expected to create over 2,500 jobs and includes amenities such as updated and expanded concessions, a vastly improved passenger screening experience, and improved parking facilities.

Final reports on 2018 year-end performance will be published on the CDA website this spring. For more information on airport performance for O'Hare and Midway, please visit [www.flychicago.com]www.flychicago.com

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