

Statement of Rep. Harry Mitchell
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Subcommittee on Aviation
6/6/07

--Thank you Mr. Chairman.

--Over the past few months, we have explored numerous issues relating to the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”).

--In so doing, we have made clear that safety is our top priority.

--Today we will hear from the National Transportation Safety Board (“NTSB”) about the priorities they think the Federal Aviation Administration needs to have, in order to prevent future accidents.

--Of these, I am particularly we concerned about runway incursions and what we can do to reduce them.

--Over the last decade, Phoenix Sky Harbor has witnessed no less than 69 incursions, including 6 which were considered serious.

According to Forbes Magazine, this is a key reason they now consider Sky Harbor America's 4th most dangerous airport.

--And we are facing this issue at a time when, according to the FAA, 70 percent of our air traffic controllers are going to become eligible to retire over the next 10 years.

--Clearly need to make sure the FAA has the resources to keep the flying public safe....both in the air, as well as on the ground.

--I look forward to hearing from today's witnesses.

--I yield back the balance of my time.