

Good Morning. My name is Ron Kaplan, and I am here to speak on behalf of the Ohio Air & Space Hall of Fame and Museum, for which I serve pro bono as its director and chairman. Globally recognized as the "Birthplace of Aviation," the great state of Ohio is home to a diverse pantheon of trailblazing aviators and astronauts, advocates and entrepreneurs, inventors and engineers, and others whose enduring contributions and distinguished service have put Ohio at the forefront of flight for over a century. Ohioans have led mankind from soaring over Huffman Prairie to walking on the lunar surface, helping shape our state, our nation and our world in countless positive ways. Over 40 states have established their own state aviation Halls of Fame. Surprisingly, up until now Ohio has not had an appropriate organization and place with which to prominently honor its own true heroes and legends of flight. To serve in that role, the Ohio Air & Space Hall of Fame and Museum has been established as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, its core mission being to permanently preserve the inspiring legacies of this state's outstanding pioneers of flight and publicly herald their achievement, both as a point of pride and to foster continued innovation. The Ohio Air and Space Hall of Fame will be an education force multiplier for all ages, serving to connect students, scholars and visitors with the compelling achievements of Ohioans like the Wright Brothers, Eddie Rickenbacker, John Glenn, Jerrie Mock, and Neil Armstrong – to name but a few. The Ohio Air and Space Hall of Fame has an exceptional opportunity to further benefit the community through the renovation of its physical home, the Original Columbus Air Terminal, a 1929 art deco building that is on the National Register of Historic Places. The three-story, 13,500 square foot structure, including its distinctive control tower, sits on the southeast corner of what is now John Glenn International Airport (CMH). The site was personally selected by Charles Lindbergh. This uniquely historic structure was at risk of disappearing, however in 2016 a local group raised funds to stabilize the building. The Ohio Air and Space Hall of Fame recently agreed to a long-term lease with the Columbus Regional Airport Authority. This allows us to oversee the preservation of this unique national architectural treasure, transforming it into a civic showpiece, event space, tourist destination, and most importantly, an educational asset to be enjoyed by the public. The centerpiece of our mission will be the Terminal's first-floor galleries of interactive exhibits, displays and artifacts in the terminal accessible to students, scholars, and the public. They will be augmented through on-site programming that features speakers, seminars, festivals, ceremonies, and visiting aircraft significant to Ohio's heritage of flight. Ultimately included on premises will be an archives division serving as a state and national resource, and business meeting space. Thanks to a State of Ohio grant of \$550,000 in 2018 designated for the Hall of Fame's renovation and establishment in the original Port Columbus terminal, and with the lease in hand, the Phase One goal is to raise a minimum of an additional \$275,000 in state required matching funds to enable opening to the public in early 2021. The \$825,000 total will enable the key first phase renovation of the terminal, improvements to public parking areas, inaugural exhibits for public viewing, and development of education programming for the public's benefit. I stand before you to request that the State Grant of \$550,000 toward the renovation of the original Port Columbus terminal be re-appropriated, thus ensuring that Ohio's air and space heritage, especially the stories of its men and women pioneers, inspire everyone for generations to come. Thank you for this opportunity to share. I am happy to answer any questions about the project.