Boeing Comments on WTO's Landmark Decision on Airbus Subsidies

CHICAGO, March 23 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Boeing issued the following statement following news reports quoting officials who indicated that the United States has prevailed on all of the major issues in the WTO's final decision, which reaffirms its earlier interim decision, in the U.S. case against European subsidies to Airbus.

"This is a powerful, landmark judgment and good news for aerospace workers across America who for decades have had to compete against a heavily subsidized Airbus. U.S. officials have estimated the commercial value to Airbus of all the government launch aid subsidies it has received at more than $178 billion (in 2006 dollars). Government subsidies have been used to support the creation of every Airbus product, including the A330/A340, which received more than $5 billion in development aid, and the A380, which received $4 billion in subsidies. Those and other European government subsidies to Airbus have significantly distorted the global market for large commercial airplanes, causing adverse effect to Boeing and costing America tens of thousands of high-tech jobs.

"We appreciate the strong bipartisan efforts by both the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government to right this wrong and ensure that America's aerospace workers get a fair shake. Because of the U.S. government's undiminished resolve to end illegal subsidies, this decision should level the competitive playing field once and for all with Airbus, as well as set an important precedent for other nations with aspirations to enter the commercial airplane business.

"Airbus and its sponsor governments continue to re-affirm their commitment to using subsidized launch aid to fund the next Airbus airplane, the A350. We urge them to change course and fully comply with the WTO's clear ruling. The WTO panel has painstakingly and professionally reviewed all of the evidence that's been presented the past four years. It is extremely important to international trade and global economic growth that governments and businesses abide by the WTO's rules. Markets, not parliaments, should pick the winners in the global aerospace industry."

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