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Dedicated to the Advancement of the International Helicopter Community

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Helicopter Association International Applauds Introduction of RETAIN Act

Alexandria, Va. (June 22, 2021) – Helicopter Association International (HAI) applauds Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) for introducing the Recognizing and Ensuring Taxpayer Access to Infrastructure Necessary for GPS and Satellite Communications Act of 2021 (RETAIN Act). This legislation addresses the full extent of the cost impact of the Ligado Order, which may interfere with GPS and satellite communications systems.

Helicopters conduct many critical missions, including air medical, firefighting, aerial application, and heavy – lift operations. These and many other helicopter industry operations occur predominantly in low-altitude environments, where increased proximity to flight obstructions and decreased line of sight are prevalent. Helicopter operators across the nation rely heavily on the effectiveness of GPS navigation systems and satellite communications to carry out their work safely and effectively.

The RETAIN Act would ensure that all costs associated with GPS and satellite communications interference due to the Ligado Order would be covered before the spectrum is repurposed. The legislation calls on Ligado to reimburse both the public and private sectors for all associated costs, thereby alleviating American taxpayers of the financial burden of ensuring the continued reliability of the country’s navigation and communications systems, which is critical to conducting the lifesaving operations helicopters perform.

HAI thanks Sen. Inhofe for introducing legislation that will protect the dependability of mission-critical systems in helicopters and commends his steadfast dedication to aviation safety.

It is of the utmost importance to the vertical lift industry that the effective date of the Ligado Order be postponed until the full extent of costs associated with harmful interference is adequately addressed. Maintaining the integrity of GPS and satellite communications systems is fundamental to preserving aviation safety across the nation.

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HAI is the professional trade association for the international helicopter industry and represents more than 1,100 global companies and over 16,000 industry professionals in more than 65 countries. Each year, HAI members safely operate more than 3,700 helicopters and remotely piloted aircraft approximately 2.9 million hours. HAI is dedicated to the promotion of the helicopter as a safe, effective method of commerce and to the advancement of the international helicopter community.