

**Opening Statement
Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth
Subcommittee on Transportation and Public Assets**

**Hearing on “Preventing Another MH370: Setting International Standards for Airline
Flight Tracking.”**

February 25, 2015

I would like to thank Chairman Mica for holding this hearing today. This hearing is critically important to determine what steps are being taken to improve the tracking of commercial international flights to ensure that all flights can be tracked in the event of an emergency.

Malaysian Airlines flight 370 disappeared on March 8, 2014. After almost year of what has become the most expensive search operation in aviation history, the aircraft has still not been located. All passengers and crew on the flight are presumed dead.

I have found this event to be especially tragic and upsetting. First, my heart goes out to the families of those 239 people that lost their lives on flight 370. Not only did they lose a loved one, but they have been denied any level of closure because the airline or even its remnants have yet to be found. I can only imagine the pain these families continue to suffer through as we are having this hearing today.

In addition, the disappearance of Flight MH 370 exposes preventable weaknesses in the international flight tracking systems. As a pilot, frequent flyer, and Member of Congress who represents a district neighboring one the busiest airports in the nation, I find it unacceptable that in 2014 a plane can go completely missing for such an extended period of time without any answers or explanations.

With all of the technology available to us, with GPS and satellite phones, how could this disappearance have happened in 2014? And why do commercial aircrafts lack adequate tracking equipment?

Today I hope to receive some answers. Our witnesses include organizations that have been on the front lines of improving flight tracking systems as well as creating a unified system for international flight tracking. The International Civil Aviation Organization, the International Air Transport Association and the National Transportation Safety Board have been active participants in trying to find a solution to this problem and I would like to thank you for the work you are doing.

I look forward to fully examining this issue in great lengths today and I look forward to working with the Chairman to continue to monitor to these issues in the future.