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October 18, 2017

*PRESS RELEASE*

**Despite Years of Successful Growth, Nashville’s Airport President and CEO, Rob Wigington, Terminated After Undergoing Liver Transplant Surgery**

**Nashville, TN**—The Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority (“MNA”) Board of Commissioners voted during today’s meeting to terminate President and CEO Rob Wigington. On September 5, 2017, MNA relieved Wigington of his duties when Wigington attempted to return to work after taking medical leave.

In June 2017, Wigington notified the board that he would require medical leave to undergo a liver transplant surgery. Plans were made for his leave as well as his return under provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act. After a successful transplant and recovery, MNA received a medical release certifying Wigington was fully fit to return to work on September 5, 2017. Upon his arrival, despite being cleared to return, the Board relieved Wigington of all duties and responsibilities.

“MNA has violated the Family Medical Leave Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and Wigington’s contract,” said Kevin Sharp, managing partner of the Nashville office of Sanford Heisler Sharp, LLP, the law firm representing Rob Wigington. “This type of temporal proximity is compelling evidence that MNA’s decision to fire Wigington is in response to his liver transplant surgery and in retaliation for his period of FMLA leave.”

During Wigington’s tenure, the Nashville International Airport (“BNA”) and John C. Tune Airport (“JWN”) have grown and thrived. BNA has received extensive media acclaim and has received multiple industry awards during his tenure, including “Best Airports in the World,” “Top Ten Domestic Airports,” a USO Four-Star Sponsor Award, and the AAAE Airport Project of the Year for the Southeast. Wigington was named one of the Nashville Business Journal’s “Most Admired CEOs” in 2013, 2014, and 2015, and received the FAA’s Air Carrier Manager of the Year in 2013.

Rob Wigington joined MNA in July 2011, bringing more than 30 years of airport industry experience. During this time, Wigington has aided MNA in achieving many successes. Wigington secured more than 10 new airlines, including British Airways, and over 20 new, non-stop destinations in major cities such as Boston, Seattle, San Francisco, and London. He spearheaded MNA’s geothermal lake project, an award-winning sustainable infrastructure project that has reduced the airport’s energy costs. Wigington also conceived the “BNA Vision” project, the largest expansion program at BNA designed to accommodate the rapid growth and record number of travelers. He propelled environmental and sustainability initiatives garnering world-wide recognition for MNA. In recent years, he built up MNA’s financial strength and credit ratings, including cash reserves exceeding \$40 million, without any local or state taxes. Wigington consistently received stellar annual performance reviews and these accomplishments are evidence of the growth and stability achieved under his leadership.

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