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Southwest Airlines Celebrates The Beginning Of New Austin To Reagan National Airport Service

Dignitaries Gather in Austin to Officially Kick Off the New Service

AUSTIN, Texas, July 9, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- [Southwest Airlines](#) (NYSE: LUV) service between Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) officially kicked off today with a patriotic sendoff complete with a water arch salute and a Customer celebration at the gate this morning in Austin. Southwest Airlines Board Member and Presiding Director Dr. William Cunningham joined U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, U.S. Representative Michael McCaul (TX-10), and City of Austin Aviation Department Executive Director Jim Smith in a morning news conference at AUS to launch the airline's new service.

"Today is a great day for the people of Southwest Airlines, as well as Austin and Washington D.C. travelers who are looking for low cost, nonstop service between the two Capitals," said Cunningham. "I want to thank everyone who wrote a letter or signed the petition in support of this new, and much needed service. With the start of this route, our footprint in the D.C. area continues to grow."

In February, Congress passed legislation creating "slot exemptions" at DCA authorizing four new flights to points beyond the airport's normal 1,250 mile perimeter. In early May, the Department of Transportation (DOT) awarded Southwest one of these slot pairs to provide the only nonstop service on the DCA-AUS route.

In addition, last week Southwest took another step to expand its service at DCA by purchasing four inside-perimeter slots from another airline. These slots can be used to serve any airport within the 1,250 mile DCA perimeter. Southwest has elected to use these slots to provide two daily roundtrips between DCA and St. Louis, MO (STL). The carrier is working with the DOT and FAA on exact schedule times and expects to begin selling flights in late July or early August. Southwest's service will be the only large jet service between STL and DCA.

Currently, AirTran Airways, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines, operates 12 daily DCA flights that will be transitioned to Southwest as the integration of the two carriers continues throughout the next couple of years. Southwest already has a large footprint in the greater Washington D.C. metropolitan area with its service at Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) and Dulles International Airport (IAD), but this will be Southwest's first service to Reagan National Airport, located in close proximity to the Nation's Capital and downtown Washington DC.

Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers — offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded and has acquired AirTran

Airways, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co. Southwest serves 73 cities in 38 states and remains one of the most honored airlines in the world known for its commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet. To read more about how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen, visit southwest.com/cares to read the Southwest Airlines One Report™. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,300 flights a day and has more than 39,000 Employees.

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