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For May 3, 2008 Release Joan Haber, Chair, 941-323-1418

Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
www.FCCDHH.org

JAX AIRPORT GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND TO ASSIST TRAVELERS WITH HEARING LOSS

Due to advocacy efforts of Judy Martin of the Jacksonville Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of Florida and Joan Haber, Chair of the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the new Jacksonville International Airport's concourse will have exciting new features to assist travelers with hearing loss! The new concourse opens to incoming passengers the evening of May 6 and to all passengers May 7.

The Official Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening ceremony is May 9.

Airport executives Rich Stroup and Bob Molle report the airport has installed TTY's and are ordering a videophone, plus all pay phones will have volume control. Public Service Announcements will be displayed on the Flight Information Display System (FIDS) as a scrolling text and these announcements will display text of what is being said verbally through the PA system. All the televisions throughout the airport will have the captions on all the time. Efforts are being made to get all gate announcements displayed in real time text format. This is something that will happen after the Concourse opens as they are doing their research on this and getting the airlines to agree to help foot the bill.

"I am very pleased with Rich Stroup, Bob Molle and the Jacksonville International Airport's willingness to go above and beyond the call to accommodate people with hearing loss. I am also grateful to Judy Martin of the Jacksonville Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association, who brought the news of the construction of the new terminal to our attention in time to advocate for the accommodation. I will announce this at the FCCDHH public hearing May 8 and 9 in Sarasota, which will be attended by deaf community thought-leaders from throughout the state," said Chairperson Joan Haber.

It is estimated there are nearly three million citizens in Florida who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, or deaf-blind. The Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was established by the Florida Legislature in 2004. Its mission is to serve as an advisory and coordinating body which recommends policies that address the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened and deaf-blind persons, as well as methods that improve coordination of services among the public and private entities and to provide technical assistance, advocacy, and education.