Thank you, Al (Caslavka, Rockwell Collins) and thank you all for having me here today. Mayor Mitchell, thank you for hosting us in your fair city. I’m especially impressed with the location of today’s event. Take a great state like Texas, a beautiful city like Richardson, and a state-of-the-art facility like this, and you have a combination that’s hard to beat.

It’s no wonder that companies keep moving to Texas, expanding their operations, and increasing their investment in our state. I tell people this all the time, but Texas IS wide-open for business. And business means jobs. And good jobs make for a much better quality of life. Today, Rockwell Collins is creating jobs for Texans and we’re glad to be part of that with this investment through the Texas Enterprise Fund. For those of you who aren't familiar with the Texas Enterprise Fund, it is a program that we launched back in 2003 when we asked the Legislature to dedicate dollars for a deal-closing fund. We’d seen too many companies look at Texas for investment, but walk away to better deals in other states. This fund significantly cut down on that experience. By providing deal-closing dollars, we have been able to get a Texas-sized share of corporate investment for our state. Used in coordination with local incentives, enhanced by the efforts of our chambers of commerce, we are luring businesses to the Lone Star State left and right.

The Enterprise Fund has been directly responsible for companies committing more than 51,000 new jobs, $15.5 billion in capital investment in our state and an economy that continues to grow. Here at Rockwell Collins, you have a company that is a worldwide leader in aviation communications with nearly $4 billion in annual revenues. You might ask, is a Texas Enterprise Fund grant of nearly $1.7 million just a drop in their bucket? I’d say it’s just the opposite. This investment by the state of Texas will help Rockwell Collins pour another $6.7 million into this area while creating 334 jobs. They already employ 900 people here in Richardson. With this expansion, Rockwell Collins will provide an additional 300 Texas families the means to sustain themselves. This project is ample proof that our state is still advancing as a leader in high-tech design and manufacturing. And it means that our state is investing resources where it makes a difference for Texans.

To date, the Enterprise Fund has strategically invested nearly $370 million in companies that we believe will yield a high return for Texas taxpayers. That’s putting our money where it makes a difference. I would also say that this expansion and the quality of jobs it creates is a reminder to young people that there is a future in technology. The people who work in a place like Rockwell Collins, who take home a better-than-average salary, are well-educated in key areas like math, science and engineering. We need to work even harder to identify and educate tomorrow’s leaders in this field.
Rockwell Collins is an excellent representative of the companies that make up the Aerospace and Defense group within our Industry Cluster Initiative. Industry experts in each of these clusters are working together to determine the educational needs for their future workforce. And they’re sharing their insights with educators, regulators and other members of our statewide Competitiveness Council. This group is committed to ensuring that our state is not just competitive in the southwestern U.S., but on a global scale. Through this Council, I hope to see us streamline our state by refining our regulations, enhancing our educational standards, and removing unnecessary obstacles to trade. We must ensure that Texas remains the destination of choice for companies, their capital investment and their jobs.

I also want to say that I’m especially proud of the work the Rockwell Collins does to improve conditions for our troops. Creating technologies that speed communications, improve the accuracy of airborne navigation, and deconflict the battlefield is an investment in those who defend our way of life. By increasing their advantage, you protect their lives and give them tools they need to succeed in the defense of our nation. Thank you for that and thank you for making this investment in Texas. I believe there is no better place to live, work or raise a family than our great state. And I’m glad we can make it better.

I’d now like to introduce to you a man who seems to like Texas, the CEO of Rockwell Collins, Mr. Clay Jones. Thank you, Clay. And now, I’d like you to meet a man who REALLY likes it here, the mayor of Richardson, Mr. Steve Mitchell. Steve? [MITCHELL SPEAKS]

Thank you, Steve. Now, if any of our friends in the media have any questions about this project, we’d be glad to answer your questions.