

Honorable Guest Remarks by Ambassador Sugiyama

*for the JITI High Speed Rail Seminar
held in Washington DC on October 3rd, 2018*

❖ The outline of the Honorable Guest Remarks by Ambassador Sugiyama is as follows.

Good afternoon and thank you for inviting me to be part of this seminar. And I want to thank Mr. Shukuri, the chairman of the Japan Transport and Tourism Research Institute, for his efforts to make the seminar possible.

As ambassador, I get daily press clips about Japan that have appeared in the American media. In May, the Washington Post and others covered a story about a Japanese railway that apologized because a train had left 25 seconds early. Six months before a similar story had appeared, so the Post headline raised this question for Americans, “Why can’t we have the same problem?” No American has yet asked me that question but my answer would be this: We Japanese love trains; we rely on trains; and we know how to build and operate them. And we are happy to share our knowledge and experience. Since I arrived here in March, one of my most important tasks as ambassador has been to encourage this sharing.

Japanese high-speed rail, as you probably know, is called “Shinkansen,” a word that’s become identified with my nation. Shinkansen represents not only the pinnacle of railway technology but also the values of safety, trust, quality and efficiency. It is these qualities that Japan wishes to share with American friends through our railway technology to realize new technology of rail transportation system in the United States by cooperation between Japan and the United States.

Maglev is the next generation of ultra high-speed rail. And by 2027, the Superconducting

Maglev from Tokyo to Nagoya will be open. The 178 miles will take only 40 minutes, and it will revolutionize high-speed rail travel for the 21st century. The Texas high-speed railway project and the northeast corridor Maglev would likewise revolutionize American transportation. Japan stands ready to contribute its technology and experience to the high-speed railway plans of this country. From my speaking with Americans, they are very eager to move to this future.

Every day I see or hear examples of Japan and the United States deepening their cooperation—regarding security, economics and culture. I believe that high-speed rail could be one of the greatest examples of Japan-U.S. cooperation in the first half of the 21st Century. That cooperation can be furthered at this meeting. So, thank you for inviting me. You have my very best wishes for the success of the seminar.