

March 5, 2018

The Honorable James Inhofe
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

**Aviation Industry Strongly Supports Inhofe Aviation
Workforce Development Pilot Program Bill**

Dear Senators Inhofe, Blumenthal, Moran, and Cantwell:

The U.S. aviation industry is facing a technical worker shortage that threatens to undermine the growth and competitiveness of one of the most important sectors of our economy. With that in mind, the undersigned 17 organizations, representing a broad cross-section of the industry, strongly support your legislation to establish an aviation technical workforce development pilot program.

Your legislation would incentivize businesses, labor organizations, schools, and governmental entities to work together to pursue innovative new strategies to develop technical talent and encourage workers to pursue aviation careers. Given the scale of the challenge facing companies in Oklahoma, Connecticut, Kansas, Washington, and elsewhere around the country, your proposal could not be timelier.

An analysis by Boeing suggests that 118,000 new technicians will be needed in North America over the next two decades. The consulting firm Oliver Wyman has forecast that demand for aviation maintenance technicians will outstrip supply by 2022. The Aviation Technician Education Council (ATEC) recently determined that new entrants make up just two percent of the aviation technician population annually, while 30 percent of the workforce is at or near retirement age. The preliminary results of the 2018 member survey currently being conducted by the Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA) further illustrate the problem:

- More than 80 percent of respondents report difficulty finding qualified technicians and more than half of responding companies have unfilled positions.
- As a result, companies say it is taking longer to complete work for customers (78 percent), that their companies are not adding new technical capabilities (30 percent), and, in some cases, that their companies are turning down new business (17 percent).

Letter to Senators Inhofe, Blumenthal, Moran, and Cantwell

March 5, 2018

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- It's no surprise that with almost three quarters of respondents wanting to expand their workforces this year, "difficulty finding and retaining technical talent" has been identified by ARSA members as one of the most significant strategic threats to growth and profitability.

The U.S. aviation industry is a diamond in the crown of our economy. Working together, manufacturers, operators, maintainers, labor organizations, schools, and workers have built an industry that provides unprecedented mobility for people and goods. Your legislation will help ensure our member organizations have the technical professionals they need to grow, compete globally, and, most importantly, continue to ensure the safety of civil aviation aircraft.

Thank you for your leadership. We stand ready to assist you in enacting your bill into law.

Sincerely,

Aeronautical Repair Station Association
Aerospace Industries Association
Aerospace Maintenance Council
Aircraft Electronics Association
Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
A4A
Aviation Suppliers Association
Aviation Technician Education Council
Cargo Airline Association
General Aviation Manufacturers Association
Helicopter Association International
Modification and Replacement Parts Association
National Air Carrier Association
National Air Transportation Association
Professional Aviation Maintenance Association
Regional Airline Association

2018 OFFICERS

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Mayor
Little Rock, Arkansas

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Gary, Indiana

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Los Angeles, California

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Councilmember
Cleveland, Ohio

**Chief Executive Officer/
Executive Director**
Clarence E. Anthony

Deputy Executive Director
Antoinette A. Samuel

March 7, 2018

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
United States Senate
205 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
United States Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
United States Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
United States Senate
521 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Inhofe, Blumenthal, Moran and Cantwell:

On behalf of the 19,000 cities, villages and towns represented by the National League of Cities (NLC), we thank you for your leadership through the introduction of legislation to establish an aviation maintenance workforce development pilot program. We are pleased to support this legislation that would invest in strategies to address the workforce needs in a critical sector to cities across the country.

As city leaders work to address the aging physical infrastructure needs in communities across America, we must simultaneously invest in the human capital infrastructure that make these projects possible. Federal leadership and investment in programs that support the workforce development pipeline is essential to ensure a diverse and skilled workforce.

With an increasing number of workers in the aviation maintenance sector slated for retirement over the next decade, widening the gap between supply and demand, it's critical to invest in connections to education and training that will support the skills and labor gap in this important industry. For cities across the nation, airports are an important economic engine, providing jobs and critical infrastructure connections.

As Congress begins to consider infrastructure investments across America, we look forward to partnering with you in support of passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Clarence E. Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities



Mark Stodola
Mayor, Little Rock, Arkansas
President, National League of Cities

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2506

To establish an aviation maintenance workforce development pilot program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MORAN, and Ms. CANTWELL) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To establish an aviation maintenance workforce development pilot program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. AVIATION MAINTENANCE WORKFORCE DEVEL-**
4 **OPMENT PILOT PROGRAM.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the Federal
6 Aviation Administration may carry out a pilot program to
7 provide grants for eligible projects to support the edu-
8 cation and recruitment of aviation maintenance technical
9 workers and the development of the aviation maintenance
10 industry workforce.

1 (b) PROJECT GRANTS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
3 appropriated \$5,000,000 for each of the fiscal years
4 2019 through 2023 to provide grants under the pilot
5 program established under subsection (a).

6 (2) DOLLAR AMOUNT LIMIT.—Not more than
7 \$500,000 shall be made available for any one-time
8 grant in any fiscal year under the pilot program es-
9 tablished under subsection (a).

10 (c) ELIGIBLE APPLICATIONS.—An application for a
11 grant under the pilot program established under sub-
12 section (a) shall be submitted, in such form as the com-
13 mittee established under subsection (c) may specify, joint-
14 ly by—

15 (1) a holder of a certificate issued under part
16 21, 121, 135, or 145 of title 14, Code of Federal
17 Regulations, or a labor organization representing
18 aviation maintenance workers;

19 (2) an accredited institution of higher education
20 (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education
21 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)); and

22 (3) a State or local governmental entity.

23 (d) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—For purposes of the pilot
24 program established under subsection (a), an eligible
25 project is a project—

1 (1) to establish new educational programs that
2 teach technical skills used in aviation maintenance,
3 including purchasing equipment, or to improve exist-
4 ing such programs;

5 (2) to establish scholarships or apprenticeships
6 for individuals pursuing employment in the aviation
7 maintenance industry;

8 (3) to support outreach about careers in the
9 aviation maintenance industry to—

10 (A) primary, secondary, and post-sec-
11 ondary school students; or

12 (B) to communities underrepresented in
13 the industry;

14 (4) to support educational opportunities related
15 to aviation maintenance in economically disadvan-
16 taged geographic areas;

17 (5) to support transition to careers in aviation
18 maintenance, including for members of the Armed
19 Forces; or

20 (6) to otherwise enhance aviation maintenance
21 technical education or the aviation maintenance in-
22 dustry workforce, as determined by a unanimous
23 vote of the committee established under subsection
24 (e).

25 (e) GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW.—

1 (1) REVIEW COMMITTEE.—The Administrator
2 shall establish a committee to review and select ap-
3 plications for grants under the pilot program estab-
4 lished under subsection (a).

5 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—

6 (A) IN GENERAL.—The committee estab-
7 lished under paragraph (1) shall be comprised
8 of—

9 (i) representatives of aircraft repair
10 stations, air carriers, design and produc-
11 tion approval holders, labor organizations,
12 business aviation, general aviation, edu-
13 cational institutions, and other relevant
14 sectors; or

15 (ii) representatives of recognized in-
16 dustry groups representing entities de-
17 scribed in clause (i).

18 (B) LIMITATION.—The committee estab-
19 lished under paragraph (1) shall have not more
20 than 9 members.