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Support a skilled and dynamic aviation workforce through grant program funding

An analysis by Boeing suggests that airlines in North America will need 189,000 new technicians and 206,000 new pilots over the next two decades. The consulting firm Oliver Wyman has forecast that demand for aviation maintenance technicians will outstrip supply by 2022. More than 80 percent of respondents to ARSA's 2018 member survey reported difficulty finding qualified technicians and more than half of the responding companies have unfilled positions. A survey of ATEC members suggest that at a time when demand is at an all-time high, enrollment in aviation technician programs is declining.

Despite facing a shortage of qualified technical workers, the aviation maintenance industry is growing and hiring. Federal support of local workforce programs would help train a new generation of skilled workers for high-paying jobs. Congress should focus on career and technical education programs that create new opportunities for collaboration between employers, government agencies, and educational institutions to build programs that align with business needs while reinforcing the importance of applied skills.

To that end, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) created new grant programs to recruit and train the next generation of aerospace workers and pilots. Sec. 625 of the law creates two Department of Transportation-(DOT) administered grant programs which have been endorsed by more than 40 leading aviation organizations.

The goal of the technician program is to incentivize collaboration between key stakeholders and grant applications must be jointly submitted by business or union, school and state or local governmental entity. The programs are authorized at \$5 million each for five years starting in 2019 and can provide grants of up to \$500,000.

ATEC joins aviation allies urging congressional leaders to fully fund the \$10 million authorized for these programs as part of the fiscal year (FY) 2020 appropriations process.

About ATEC: *ATEC is a partnership of aviation maintenance training schools and employers. The council is dedicated to promoting and supporting technician education through its communications, advocacy programs and networking events.*