FY 2022 Funding for Aviation Technician & Pilot Workforce Grant Programs

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Chairmen Leahy, Price and Schatz, Vice Chairman Shelby and Ranking Members Granger, Diaz-Balart and Collins:

As you begin the FY 2022 appropriations process, the 42 undersigned organizations, representing aviation maintainers, commercial operators, general and business aviation, manufacturers, labor organizations, educators, airports, and state and local government officials urge you to once again fully fund the aviation workforce development grant programs created by Sec. 625 of the 2018 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) law.

We are extremely grateful that Congress appropriated resources for the grant programs at the authorized levels ($5 million apiece, $10 million total) for FYs 2020 and 2021 and pleased the FAA initiated them earlier this year. We understand that there have been numerous applications and considerable interest in both programs.

As the industry begins to recover from the worst economic conditions it has ever experienced, the grant programs are more important than ever. Due to pandemic-related economic disruptions, many seasoned pilots and technicians retired early over the past year. This has only exacerbated the shortage of the skilled personnel the industry needs to operate safely and efficiently.
With the foregoing in mind, Congress, the FAA and industry must stay focused and recognize that developing the next generation of pilots and maintenance technicians requires a long-term commitment. The resources you provide for the Sec. 625 programs will encourage collaboration between schools, aviation companies, unions and government to find new solutions to the skills gap and help more Americans to pursue aviation careers. That, in turn, will contribute to the long-term efficiency of the nation’s aviation system, the industry’s global competitiveness and the nation’s overall economic health.

Thank you once again for making funds available for Sec. 625 for FYs 2020 and 2021 and for considering our request for these important resources in FY 2022. We look forward to working with you in the coming months to build on the recent progress and make the programs a long-term success.

Sincerely,

Aeronautical Repair Station Association  
Aerospace Industries Association  
Aerospace Maintenance Council  
Aircraft Electronics Association  
Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association  
Airlines for America  
Air Medical Operators Association  
Airports Council International – North America  
Allied Pilots Association  
American Association of Airport Executives  
Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International  
Association for Women in Aviation Maintenance  
Aviation Council of Pennsylvania  
Aviation Suppliers Association  
Aviation Technician Education Council  
Cargo Airline Association  
Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations  
Experimental Aircraft Association  
Flight School Association of North America  
General Aviation Manufacturers Association  
Greater Miami Aviation Association  
Helicopter Association International  
International Air Transport Association  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
International Council of Air Shows  
Modification and Replacement Parts Association  
National Agricultural Aviation Association  
National Air Carrier Association  
National Air Transportation Association  
National Association of State Aviation Officials  
National Business Aviation Association  
National League of Cities  
NetJets Association of Shared Aircraft Pilots  
Oklahoma Aeronautics Commission  
Professional Aviation Maintenance Association  
Recreational Aviation Foundation  
Regional Air Cargo Carriers Association  
Regional Airline Association  
South Florida Aviation Maintenance Council  
Veterans Airlift Command  
Westchester Aircraft Maintenance Association