

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2025

The Honorable Bryan Bedford
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20591

Administrator Bedford:

We are deeply concerned about the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) failure to distribute Congressionally appropriated funding through the Aviation Workforce Development Grant Program.

Despite the requirements under the 2024 FAA Reauthorization law, the FAA has yet to initiate the fiscal year 2025 Aviation Workforce Development grant cycle. Applicants were informed that the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Round Four, initially issued in January 2025 under the Biden Administration, would be revised, and that they would need to reapply. However, a specific timeline has not been provided for that reissuance. Additionally, while it is our understanding that the FAA has awarded workforce grant funds authorized under the 2018 Reauthorization Act, Round Three grantees that received "continuation award" notices in March 2025 have yet to receive those funds. These ongoing delays are stalling critical aviation workforce development at a time when the industry can least afford it.

As you are aware, the U.S. aviation industry recently reported facing a 10 percent shortage of certified aircraft mechanics in 2025, driven by a wave of retirements and growing demand for skilled labor in commercial aviation.¹ The current pipeline of aircraft mechanics is insufficient to support increased aircraft utilization, commercial fleet expansion, and the maintenance needs of aging aircraft in the decades ahead. Further, a March 2024 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that many commercial aviation suppliers are struggling to hire enough skilled workers to meet the demand for their products.²

Recognizing these workforce challenges, Congress established the Aviation Workforce Development Grant Program in the bipartisan 2018 FAA Reauthorization law to bolster the pipeline of pilots and aircraft maintenance technicians through apprenticeships, internships, scholarships, and educational outreach. The program's importance was reaffirmed when Congress increased its funding by \$40 million through fiscal year 2028 and expanded the program to include aviation manufacturing workforce development in the bipartisan 2024 FAA Reauthorization law.

Every day that these grant awards go undistributed further delays the development and deployment of the skilled workforce needed to maintain the safety, reliability, and efficiency of our aviation system. Continued inaction to fulfill Congress's mandate to invest in America's next generation of aviation workers raises serious concerns about the FAA's commitment to air safety and the nation's global leadership in aviation.

By December 12, 2025, we expect a written response to the following questions:

¹ Allison Lampert, *Trump's DEI crackdown further strains US supply of aircraft mechanics, industry officials say*, REUTERS, (Sept. 17, 2025), available at: <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/society-equity/trumps-dei-crackdown-further-strains-us-supply-aircraft-mechanics-industry-2025-09-17/>.

² Government Accountability Office, *Commercial Aviation Manufacturing: Supply Chain Challenges and Actions to Address Them*, GAO-24-106493, (March 6, 2024), available at: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106493>.

1. How many recipients were approved for continuation awards authorized under the 2018 FAA Reauthorization law?
2. When will the DOT/FAA distribute "continuation awards" to approved recipients to complete their total grant award?
3. It is our understanding that the Administration is revising a NOFO for the fiscal year 2025 grants. When does the DOT/FAA expect to publish the revised NOFO, and what specific changes have been made to the NOFO?
4. When can fiscal year 2025 awardees expect to receive their grant funding?
5. What steps is the FAA taking to ensure that these grants are distributed without further delay and in compliance with the 2024 FAA Reauthorization law?

Ensuring safety is indispensable to the FAA's mission. Any further delay or denial of these critical grants would disregard the law and constitute a dereliction of duty to ensure safety in our skies. We look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



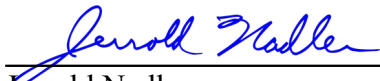
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



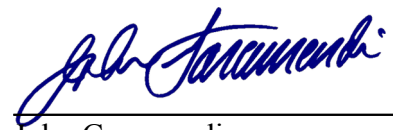
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Jerrold Nadler
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John Garamendi
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
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Dina Titus
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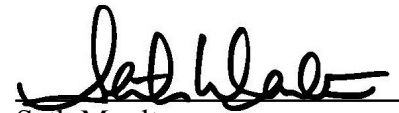
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



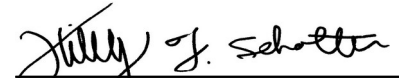
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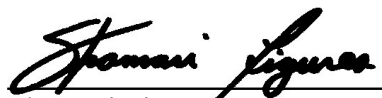
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