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| DATE | |  |
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| Delivered by email: | | [SEVP@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:SEVP@ice.dhs.gov) |
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| The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas  Secretary  U.S. Department of Homeland Security  Nebraska Ave. Center, NW  Washington, DC 20528 | | The Honorable Tae D. Johnson  Director  U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement  500 12th St SW  Washington, DC 20536 |
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| The Honorable Steve K. Francis  Acting Executive Associate Director  Homeland Security Investigations  U.S. Department of Homeland Security  500 12th St SW  Washington, DC 20536 | | |
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| Re: | Request to recognize aviation maintenance programs as a STEM designated degree | |

Dear Secretary Mayorkas, Acting Director Johnson, and Acting Executive Associate Director Francis:

The [name of organization] strongly supports a request submitted by the Aviation Technician Education Council (ATEC) to include 47.0607 Airframe Mechanics and Aircraft Maintenance Technology/Technician, 47.0608 Aircraft Powerplant Technology/Technician, 47.0609 Avionics Maintenance Technology/Technician, 48.0506 Sheet Metal Technology/Sheetworking, and 49.0104 Aviation/Airway Management and Operations to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) STEM Designated Degree Program List for the STEM Optional Practical Training 24-month extension for eligible F-1 students.

[Enter short description of organization and how the change would impact your organization directly.]

Our educational institutions prepare students to support the most advanced aviation system in the world. The aviation technical workforce is expected to be proficient in cutting-edge technology in sciences like computer science, cybersecurity, electrical technology, and engineering. Many aviation maintenance programs often offer a degree along with supporting students’ efforts to earn the federally-required Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) mechanic certificate which allows an individual to perform scheduled aircraft maintenance, make repairs, and complete FAA-required inspections.

Through its national accrediting and licensing bodies, the aviation maintenance field demands its students receive a high level of instruction in, and knowledge of, STEM content, which is why many international students look to U.S. programs as the best in the world. In fact, aviation maintenance programs contain as much as, if not more, STEM related content than a number of other disciplines widely considered to be STEM, including computer science and engineering studies.

The mechanic and technician shortage for the aviation industry is critical. The latest edition of Boeing’s Pilot and Technician outlook projects there is a need for 610,000 new maintenance technicians over the next 20 years; other reports indicate there is not enough capacity among U.S. citizens studying aviation maintenance to fill these workforce gaps. Yet, because aviation maintenance is not classified as a STEM discipline on the Designated Degree Program list, U.S. employers, and by extension, the greater U.S. economy, are denied the benefits of this talent.

For these reasons, we support ATEC’s efforts to include all aviation maintenance programs on the STEM designated list.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our views. For further information please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

[Enter name]

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| cc: | Rachel E. Canty, Deputy Assistant Director, Student and Exchange Visitor Program, [rachel.e.canty@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:rachel.e.canty@ice.dhs.gov) |
|  | Carissa F. Cutrell, Public Affairs Officer, [carissa.f.cutrell@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:carissa.f.cutrell@ice.dhs.gov) |