

May 8, 2018

The Honorable Sam Graves
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dan Lipinski
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brenda Lawrence
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

**Aviation Industry Strongly Supports Graves-Lipinski-Mullin-Lawrence
Aviation Workforce Development Pilot Program Bill**

Dear Representatives Graves, Lipinski, Mullin and Lawrence:

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 20 organizations, representing a broad cross-section of the industry, strongly support your legislation to establish an aviation technical workforce development pilot program and thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Your bill will 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 around the country, the legislation 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 results of the Aeronautical Repair Station Association's (ARSA) 2018 member survey 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 (80 percent), that their companies are not adding new technical capabilities (28 percent), and, in some cases, that their companies are turning down new business (20 percent).
- It's no surprise that with two-thirds of respondents wanting to expand their workforces this year, "difficulty finding and retaining technical talent" has been

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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 again for your leadership.

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
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
National Association of State Aviation Officials
National Business Aviation Association
Professional Aviation Maintenance Association
Regional Air Cargo Carriers Association
Regional Airline Association