

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a program to provide grants to improve the preparation and representation of certain students in aviation-related fields.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WARNOCK (for himself, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. KAINE, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. PADILLA, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a program to provide grants to improve the preparation and representation of certain students in aviation-related fields.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Inclusion
5 and Representation in the Workforce of Aviation and
6 Transportation Systems Act” or the “AIRWAYS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. EXPANDING AVIATION WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**
2 **PROGRAMS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a
4 program to provide grants for eligible projects to support
5 the education and recruitment of —

6 (1) aircraft pilots and the development of the
7 aircraft pilot workforce;

8 (2) aviation maintenance technical workers and
9 the development of the aviation maintenance work-
10 force; and

11 (3) aviation manufacturing technical workers
12 and the development of the aviation manufacturing
13 workforce.

14 (b) ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS.—

15 (1) AIRCRAFT PILOT WORKFORCE.—An applica-
16 tion for a grant for an eligible project described in
17 subsection (a)(1) may be submitted by—

18 (A) an institution of higher education, a
19 postsecondary vocational institution, or a local
20 educational agency;

21 (B) a flight school that provides flight
22 training, as defined in part 61 of title 14, Code
23 of Federal Regulations, or that holds a pilot
24 school certificate under part 141 of title 14,
25 Code of Federal Regulations;

26 (C) a State or local governmental entity;

1 (D) a non-profit organization that partici-
2 pates in the creation and delivery of workforce
3 programs; or

4 (E) an air carrier in partnership with an
5 institution of higher education, a postsecondary
6 vocational institution, or a local educational
7 agency, or a flight school described in subpara-
8 graph (B).

9 (2) AVIATION MAINTENANCE WORKFORCE.—An
10 application for a grant for an eligible project de-
11 scribed in subsection (a)(2) may be submitted by—

12 (A) an institution of higher education, a
13 postsecondary vocational institution, or a local
14 educational agency;

15 (B) a holder of a certificate issued under
16 part 21, 121, 135, or 145 of title 14, Code of
17 Federal Regulations, or a labor organization
18 representing aviation maintenance workers;

19 (C) a holder of a type or production certifi-
20 cate or similar authorization issued under sec-
21 tion 44704 of title 49, United States Code, or
22 a credible applicant for such a certificate as de-
23 termined by the Secretary;

24 (D) a State or local governmental entity;
25 or

1 (E) a non-profit organization that partici-
2 pates in the creation and delivery of workforce
3 programs.

4 (3) AVIATION MANUFACTURING WORKFORCE.—
5 An application for a grant for an eligible project de-
6 scribed in subsection (a)(3) may be submitted by—

7 (A) an institution of higher education, a
8 postsecondary vocational institution, or a local
9 educational agency;

10 (B) a holder of a type or production cer-
11 tificate or similar authorization issued under
12 section 44704 of title 49, United States Code,
13 or a credible applicant for such a certificate as
14 determined by the Secretary;

15 (C) a State or local governmental entity; or

16 (D) a non-profit organization that partici-
17 pates in the creation and delivery of workforce
18 programs.

19 (4) FORM.—The Secretary shall specify the
20 form and manner in which to submit an application
21 for a grant for an eligible project under this section.

22 (c) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—For purposes of this sec-
23 tion, an eligible project is a project—

24 (1) to create and deliver a program designed to
25 provide students enrolled in a public secondary

1 school with meaningful aviation education that is de-
2 signed to help prepare the students to become air-
3 craft pilots, aerospace engineers, unmanned aircraft
4 systems operators, aviation maintenance technical
5 workers, or aviation manufacturing technical work-
6 ers;

7 (2) to support the professional development of
8 teachers and other educators in implementing the
9 program described in paragraph (1);

10 (3) to establish new educational programs that
11 teach technical skills used by aircraft pilots, in avia-
12 tion maintenance, or in aviation manufacturing, in-
13 cluding purchasing equipment, or to improve exist-
14 ing such programs;

15 (4) to establish scholarships or registered ap-
16 prenticeships for individuals pursuing employment
17 as aircraft pilots, or in the aviation maintenance and
18 aviation manufacturing industries;

19 (5) to support outreach about careers as air-
20 craft pilots, or careers in the aviation maintenance
21 and aviation manufacturing industries to—

22 (A) students enrolled in public elementary
23 schools and public secondary schools, and post-
24 secondary school students; or

1 (B) communities under represented in the
2 aviation pilot, maintenance, and manufacturing
3 industries, including women, minorities, and in-
4 dividuals in economically disadvantaged geo-
5 graphic areas and rural communities;

6 (6) to support educational opportunities related
7 to aircraft pilots, aviation maintenance, and aviation
8 manufacturing in economically disadvantaged geo-
9 graphic areas and rural communities;

10 (7) to support transition to aircraft pilot ca-
11 reers or careers in aviation maintenance and avia-
12 tion manufacturing, including for veterans and mem-
13 bers of the Armed Forces; or

14 (8) to otherwise expand the aircraft pilot, avia-
15 tion maintenance, and aviation manufacturing
16 workforces.

17 (d) GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW.—In reviewing and
18 selecting applications for grants for eligible projects under
19 this section, the Secretary shall—

20 (1) give priority to applicants that—

21 (A) provide an assurance to use grant
22 funds to encourage the participation of popu-
23 lations that are under represented in the avia-
24 tion industry, including women, minorities, and

1 individuals in economically disadvantaged geo-
2 graphic areas and rural communities;

3 (B) provide an assurance to use grant
4 funds to encourage the participation of popu-
5 lations that are under represented in the avia-
6 tion industry, including women, minorities, and
7 individuals in economically disadvantaged geo-
8 graphic areas and rural communities, to ad-
9 dress the workforce needs of rural and regional
10 airports; or

11 (C) provide an assurance to strengthen
12 aviation programs at a minority-serving institu-
13 tion, a public institution of higher education, or
14 a public postsecondary vocational institution;
15 and

16 (2) prior to selecting among competing applica-
17 tions, consult, as appropriate, with representatives of
18 aircraft repair stations, design and production ap-
19 proval holders, air carriers, labor organizations,
20 business aviation, general aviation, educational insti-
21 tutions, and other relevant aviation sectors.

22 (e) PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER ENTITIES.—A re-
23 cipient of a grant under this section may enter into a part-
24 nership agreement with an institution of higher education,

1 a nonprofit organization, or another entity, to carry out
2 activities with the grant funds.

3 (f) GRANT AMOUNT.—The maximum amount of a
4 grant awarded for an eligible project under this section
5 for a fiscal year shall be \$1,000,000.

6 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—For each
7 of fiscal years 2024 through 2029, there is authorized to
8 be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for mak-
9 ing grants for eligible projects under this section.

10 (h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

11 (1) AIR CARRIER.—The term “air carrier” has
12 the meaning given that term in section 40102 of
13 title 49, United States Code.

14 (2) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.—The term “elemen-
15 tary school” has the meaning given that term in sec-
16 tion 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
17 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

18 (3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
19 term “institution of higher education” has the
20 meaning given that term in section 101 of the High-
21 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

22 (4) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
23 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
24 the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
25 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

1 (5) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The
2 term “minority-serving institution” means an insti-
3 tution described in section 371(a) of the Higher
4 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

5 (6) POSTSECONDARY VOCATIONAL INSTITU-
6 TION.—The term “postsecondary vocational institu-
7 tion” has the meaning given that term in section
8 102(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
9 U.S.C. 1002(c)).

10 (7) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “sec-
11 ondary school” has the meaning given that term in
12 section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
13 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

14 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
15 the Secretary of Transportation.