

# FAA REAUTHORIZATION

## *The Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act*

### **Topline Democratic Message:**

- The *Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act* to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is a bipartisan compromise done in good faith to protect the safety of the flying public.
- It will maintain American leadership in aviation safety and aerospace innovation, strengthen and diversify the U.S. aviation workforce, make groundbreaking investments in sustainability and resiliency, and improve consumer protections and accessibility.

### **Maintaining America's Gold Standard in Safety:**

- Prevents runway incursions by expanding ground surveillance and detection equipment at large and medium hub airports to better inform air traffic controllers of potential danger;
- Ensures that foreign aircraft repair stations are subject to the same standards as American repair stations;
- Holds organization designation authority (ODA) unit members accountable to a higher standard by requiring ethics training;
- Reviews and updates passenger air carriers' emergency medical kits to ensure they include overdose reversal medications, Epi-pens, updated defibrillators and more, and reviews the required training for flight crew to use such equipment;
- Reassesses federal evacuation standards for commercial planes;
- Requires 25-hour cockpit voice recorders while protecting flight crew privacy, and prohibits the recorders from being deliberately erased or tampered with after events that require NTSB follow-up;
- Studies how to reduce the harm of turbulence, radiation exposure and cabin fumes for passengers and flight crews;
- Requires the FAA to convene a committee to propose requirements for retrofitting secondary barriers on airplanes; and
- Convenes an FAA task force to develop recommendations to help prevent assaults against airline personnel.

### **Fostering Innovation:**

- Requires the FAA to establish regulations that would allow UAS to safely operate beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS), providing regulatory certainty to this innovative sector;
- Directs the FAA to coordinate with federal agencies and contractors to develop a plan to use drones for wildfire detection, mitigation and suppression efforts, and adds an FAA liaison to the National Interagency Fire Center;
- Strengthens the role of the FAA's UAS Test Sites to facilitate safe testing of new aviation technologies;
- Requires the FAA to finalize rulemaking on the certification requirements, operating rules and pilot training for powered-lift advanced air mobility (AAM) aircraft;
- Funds grants for state and local governments to plan for the deployment of AAM operations;

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- Provides funding for state, local and tribal governments to use drones to visually inspect, repair and maintain critical infrastructure, and invests in the training of the workforce to use these advanced technologies;
- Creates a new Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee to advise the FAA on future technology advancements, which will consist of representatives from the industry, community advocates and labor unions; and
- As new entrants emerge in U.S. skies, this bill ensures that the important voices of local communities and current airspace users are also heard.

## **Strengthening and Diversifying the U.S. Aviation Workforce:**

- Triples authorized funding for the FAA's workforce program (Sec. 626 Workforce Grants) to \$45 million, which will strengthen our talent pipeline of pilots, aviation maintenance technical workers, and aviation manufacturing workers;
- Sets aside 20 percent of the total \$45 million in funds for the Willa Brown Aviation Education Program to support outreach and educational opportunities in underrepresented communities;
- Directs FAA to hire the maximum amount of air traffic controllers from the FAA training academy and directs the Transportation Research Board to identify the most appropriate staffing model for future air traffic controller workforce needs;
- Allows DOT to provide technical assistance and training to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) to help them compete on projects;
- Creates the National Center for the Advancement of Aerospace, as well as the Cooperative Aviation Recruitment, Enrichment, and Employment Readiness (CAREER) Program, both of which support and promote aviation workforce development opportunities for all Americans;
- Creates the Bessie Coleman Women in Aviation Advisory Committee to advise on the recruitment, retention, education, and treatment of women in U.S. aviation;
- Establishes a DOT-DOD working group to advise on improving the career transition between the military and civilian workforces;
- Creates an FAA task group to develop recommendations on supporting the mental health of pilots; and
- Directs FAA to issue guidance to commercial airlines on crewmembers pumping during noncritical phases of flight.

## **Expanding Consumer Protections and Accessibility:**

- Directs DOT to require airlines to develop policies addressing reimbursement for passengers for hotel and meal costs when a flight is cancelled or significantly delayed;
- Requires airlines to develop airline operation resiliency plans to help prevent and limit the impact of mass flight disruptions;
- Requires airlines to establish policies on allowing passengers to sit next to their young child if adjacent seats are available;

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- Reauthorizes the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee to advise on improving the accessibility of air travel;
- Directs DOT to improve airline personnel and contractor training standards on assisting passengers with disabilities using wheelchairs with boarding and deplaning and stowing wheelchairs and mobility aids;
- Requires airlines to publish the dimensions of their cargo holds and refund passengers who book flights on planes that cannot accommodate their mobility devices;
- Directs DOT to create a roadmap for airlines to reduce damage to wheelchairs and mobility aids and better accommodate wheelchairs onboard aircraft; and
- Authorizes the FAA to lead research to improve airplane accessibility and requires DOT to provide Congress with more detailed information on disability-related complaints and recommendations to address safety challenges for these passengers.

## **Promoting Environmental Sustainability and Resilience:**

- Expands how Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding can be deployed and increases funding from \$3.35 billion to \$4 billion per year:
  - Allows airports to use existing AIP funding for hydrogen and unleaded fuel infrastructure.
  - Allows airports to use AIP funding for airport environmental resiliency projects.
  - Creates a minimum level of funding of \$150 million per year for airport noise and environmental programs within the AIP program.
- Expands the FAA's Voluntary Airport Low Emission (VALE) program to all commercial airports and streamlines eligibility requirements to help improve airport air quality;
- Requires the FAA to develop a plan to ensure general aviation aircraft can transition away from unleaded fuels by 2030; and
- Makes considerable efforts to mitigate the impacts of aviation noise on local communities, including:
  - Establishing the position of the Aviation Noise Officer to serve as a liaison to the public and make recommendations to the FAA Administrator;
  - Directing FAA to review and revise federal aviation noise standards, and to seek feedback from neighboring airport communities;
  - Requiring FAA to take certain actions to reduce undesirable aircraft noise when implementing or revising a flight procedure; and
  - Establishing an Airport Community of Interest Task Force to provide input to the FAA on areas of community interest, and an FAA Community Collaboration Program to harmonize FAA policies and procedures on community engagement, including on aviation noise.