

H.R. 3935 – Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation (SGRLAA) Act

Section by Section

Sec. 1. Short Title; Table of Contents.

This Act may be cited as the “Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act.” This section also contains the table of contents.

Title I: Authorizations and FAA Organizational Reform

Subtitle A – Authorizations

Sec. 101. Airport Planning and Development and Noise Compatibility Planning and Programs.

This section authorizes \$4 billion from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF) for the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA’s) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) account for each of fiscal years (FYs) 2024 through 2028.

Sec. 102. Facilities and Equipment.

This section authorizes from the AATF the following amounts for FAA’s Facilities & Equipment (F&E) account: \$3.375 billion for FY 2024; \$3.425 billion for FY 2025; \$3.475 billion for FY 2026; \$3.475 billion for FY 2027; and \$3.475 billion for FY 2028.

Sec. 103. Operations.

This section authorizes the following amounts for FAA’s Operations account: \$12.73 billion for FY 2024; \$13.035 billion for FY 2025; \$13.334 billion for FY 2026; \$13.640 billion for FY 2027; and \$13.954 billion for FY 2028.

Sec. 104. Extension of Miscellaneous Expiring Authorities.

This section extends various expiring authorities, including: AIP discretionary grant eligibility for the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau; continuation of the Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee; and allowing AIP funds to be spent on certain airport property redevelopment projects.

Subtitle B – FAA Organizational Reform

Sec. 121. FAA Leadership.

This section establishes the leadership of the FAA, consisting of the Administrator, a Deputy Administrator for Programs and Management (previously referred to as the “Deputy Administrator”), and a new career Deputy Administrator for Safety and Operations. The new career Deputy Administrator will provide consistency and stability to the agency between Administrations, help reduce the likelihood of needing an executive from a Line of Business or

Staff Office to perform the duties of an acting Administrator and help to manage the increasingly diverse and complex responsibilities of the FAA.

This section further explains that the Deputy Administrator for Programs and Management manages the Chief Counsel and the Assistant Administrators (except the Assistant Administrator for Rulemaking and Regulatory Improvement), and that the Deputy Administrator for Safety and Operations manages the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the air traffic control (ATC) system, the Associate Administrators, and the Assistant Administrator for Rulemaking and Regulatory Improvement.

This section also sets the rate of pay, succession plan, and general qualifications for those positions.

Sec. 122. FAA Management Board.

This section establishes the Management Board of the FAA consisting of Associate and Assistant Administrators, the Chief Counsel, and the COO.

This section reinforces the responsibilities of the Chief Counsel — to provide advice, take enforcement action, and represent the FAA in legal proceedings, but not to manage the activities of other offices or the Administrator.

This section also establishes a new Assistant Administrator for Rulemaking and Regulatory Improvement who is responsible for the FAA's rulemaking agenda, updating outdated rules of the agency, evaluating existing regulations for effectiveness, redundancy, and accuracy, coordinating with offices of the agency and other Federal entities to maintain rulemaking timelines, and receiving and processing petitions for exemption.

Sec. 123. Prohibition on Conflicting Pecuniary Interests.

Apart from pre-approved teaching, this section prohibits FAA executives and leadership from engaging in another business or having financial interests in aeronautical enterprises outside of index funds.

Sec. 124. Authority of Secretary and Administrator.

This section establishes the authorities of the FAA Administrator relating to those of the Department of Transportation (DOT), including the promulgation of regulations and responsibility for regulated aviation entities.

This section also clarifies the rulemaking approval procedures at the Department for FAA rules and sets the benchmark for significant rulemakings.

Sec. 125. Review of FAA Rulemaking Processes.

This section directs the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to evaluate the process by which FAA rulemakings are drafted, reviewed, and approved. NAPA will submit a report to Congress on their findings and provide recommendations to improve the agency's rulemaking process.

Sec. 126. Office of Innovation.

This section establishes an Office of Innovation within the FAA that can be tasked by Congress, FAA leadership, or the Management Board of the agency to assist in scoping policy or rulemaking, tackling complex issues across multiple offices or that otherwise require additional considerations, and positioning the FAA to support aerospace innovation. The office is comprised of up to 15 mid-level career employees with expertise in particular fields and who represent the interests of an employee’s respective office of the FAA during two-year appointments.

Sec. 127. Frank A. LoBiondo National Aerospace Safety and Security Campus.

This section designates the campus owned by the FAA at the Atlantic City International Airport in New Jersey as the “Frank A. LoBiondo National Aerospace and Safety Campus.”

Sec. 128. Technical Center for Advanced Aerospace.

This section renames, codifies, and expands the role of the “William J. Hughes Technical Center for Advanced Aerospace” (formerly the William J. Hughes Technical Center). The Technical Center is responsible for promoting Federal, academic, and industry cooperation and opportunities to advance aerospace research, development, and safety.

This section provides the Technical Center with the following duties: providing the aerospace industry access to Federal facilities, systems, and personnel through appropriate agreements; managing technology demonstration grant awards; identifying opportunities to improve aviation safety and efficiency of the ATC system; managing related facilities; and supporting the activities occurring in and around the Aerospace Safety and Security Campus.

Sec. 129. Office of NextGen Sunset.

This section sunsets the Office of NextGen in two and a half years and transfers the remaining duties, activities, and personnel to the William J. Hughes Technical Center for Advanced Aerospace, the Air Traffic Organization (including the NextGen Advisory Committee), and other offices of the Administration, as appropriate.

Sec. 130. FAA Ombudsman.

This section establishes an Ombudsman of the FAA in the Office of Government and Industry Affairs to assist regulated persons and entities with an action or inaction of the FAA regarding a certification, certificate, license, registration, waiver or exemption, interpretation, determination, or other activity. The Ombudsman can coordinate with relevant offices within the FAA to facilitate the review and adjudication of various actions, highlight communication lapses, and ensure that reporting or dispute resolution mechanisms are transparent. The Ombudsman can also recommend solutions to improve the agency’s processes, communication, and other issues discovered during certain processes.

This section requires that the Ombudsman ensure an initial response is provided to a person within 10 days of receiving a submission. If a covered submission relates to an alleged violation of an order, a regulation, or any other provision of Federal law or whistleblower retaliation, the Ombudsman will refer the submission to the appropriate Federal entity to adjudicate or investigate the submission.

Sec. 131. Project Dashboards and Feedback Portal.

This section requires the Ombudsman to determine whether creating public dashboards and feedback portals for various FAA offices to routinely update regulated persons and entities on their applications would be beneficial to applicants and an efficient use of agency resources.

Sec. 132. Sense of Congress on FAA Engagement During Rulemaking Activities.

This section expresses the sense of Congress that the FAA should engage with regulated entities during the pre-drafting of a rule and use, to a greater extent, docketed ex parte conversations to better inform the agency's work, reduce the time needed to adjudicate comments, and improve the timeline for the promulgation of final rules.

Sec. 133. Civil Aeromedical Institute.

This section contains a conforming amendment with no policy implications. This section maintains the Civil Aeromedical Institute.

Sec. 134. Management Advisory Council.

This section repeals the Air Traffic Services Board, which has remained unused since its inception in 2003.

This section reestablishes the Federal Aerospace Management Advisory Council (MAC). This section reaffirms the role of the MAC, to provide advice and counsel to the Administrator and serve as an oversight resource. The MAC is comprised of 13 members, including a designee of DOT, a designee of the Department of Defense (DOD), 10 members representing aerospace and technology interests — five appointed by the Secretary and five appointed by the Administrator — and one member representing an air traffic controllers union.

Sec. 135. Aviation Noise Officer.

This section establishes the position of the Aviation Noise Officer (formerly the Aircraft Noise Regional Ombudsman). Appointed by the FAA Administrator, these officers will serve as liaisons to the public, including to community groups and airports, and will make recommendations to the Administrator on rules and decisions of the agency that may have noise impacts.

Sec. 136. Chief Operating Officer.

This section contains conforming amendments based on the repeal of the Air Traffic Services Board. This section maintains the existing duties of the COO, adds the integration of new user operations into the National airspace system (NAS) to the duties of the COO, and clarifies that the COO has the responsibility for maintaining a state of good repair and the continuous improvement of the ATC system.

Sec. 137. Report on Unfunded Capital Investment Needs of Air Traffic Control System.

This section establishes a process by which the COO of the ATC system can submit to Congress, the FAA Administrator, and the DOT Secretary a list of upcoming ATC system facility and equipment needs following the publication of the President's budget that were not included in the budget. This process is similar to the Unfunded Priorities List process used by the DOD.

Sec. 138. Chief Technology Officer.

This section maintains the existing duties of the Chief Technology Officer (CTO), adds a post-employment provision, and makes conforming edits.

Sec. 139. Definition of Air Traffic Control System.

This section includes a conforming amendment to maintain the definition of the ATC system and updates it to match the current scope of the system — including third-party providers of systems, hardware, and services.

Sec 140. Peer Review of Office of Whistleblower Protection and Aviation Safety Investigations.

This section subjects the Office of Whistleblower Protection and Aviation Safety Investigations to a peer review, similar to those performed on the Offices of Inspectors General. Such review will occur every five years and will be conducted in compliance with the guidelines of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE).

Sec. 141. Cybersecurity Lead.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to designate a Cybersecurity Lead for the agency. The Cybersecurity Lead will provide briefings to Congress on their activities, including implementation of the cybersecurity subtitle of this Act.

Sec. 142. Reducing FAA Waste, Inefficiency, and Unnecessary Responsibilities.

This section repeals or amends several annual FAA reports, as well as longstanding rulemakings that were previously required under law but are no longer necessary or a pertinent use of agency resources.

Title II: General Aviation

Subtitle A – Expanding Pilot Privileges and Protections

Sec. 201. Reexamination of Pilots or Certificate Holders.

This section amends the *Pilot’s Bill of Rights* to require the FAA Administrator to provide timely notification to an airman subject to a reexamination of an airman certificate. In providing such notification, the FAA Administrator must inform the individual 1) of the nature of the reexamination and the specific activity on which the reexamination is necessitated; 2) that the reexamination shall occur within one year from the date of the notice provided by the FAA Administrator; and 3) when an oral or written response to the notification from the FAA Administrator is not required.

This section clarifies that nothing in the section prohibits the Administrator from reexamining an airman in certain scenarios.

Sec. 202. GAO Review of Pilot’s Bill of Rights.

This section requires the Comptroller General to submit to Congress a report on the implementation and application of the *Pilot’s Bill of Rights*, including the application of the

Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Federal Rules of Evidence to covered proceedings by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the impacts of the implementation of the Pilot's Bill of Rights.

Sec. 203. Expansion of BasicMed.

This section amends Section 2307 of the *FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016* by: increasing the number of allowable passengers in a covered aircraft to six (up from five); increasing the allowable number of seats in a covered aircraft to seven (up from six); and increasing the maximum certificated takeoff weight of a covered aircraft to 12,500 pounds (up from 6,000 pounds). This section also updates the medical form a state-licensed physician uses in completing a comprehensive medical examination.

The amendments made by this section are applicable beginning on the date that is 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

Sec. 204. Data Privacy.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish a process by which: 1) a private aircraft owner or operator may request the FAA Administrator to block the registration number and other similar identifiable data or information of their aircraft from any public dissemination or display for noncommercial flights; and 2) an aircraft owner or operator may request that the FAA Administrator withhold from public disclosure certain personally identifiable information on the Civil Aviation Registry website.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to establish a program for aircraft owners and operators to apply for a new International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aircraft identification code and develop a plan for which the FAA Administrator could allow for a process to disassociate an assigned Mode S code with its aircraft registry number.

This section further requires the FAA Administrator to conduct a study assessing the technical challenges, benefits, and costs of encrypting Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) signals to provide for a safer and more secure environment for national airspace system users.

Sec. 205. Prohibition on Using ADS-B Data to Initiate an Investigation.

This section prohibits the FAA Administrator from initiating an investigation (excluding a criminal investigation) of a person based exclusively on ADS-B data.

This section does not preclude the FAA from using ADS-B data in civil investigations as long as the investigation was not originally initiated based on the sole review of such data.

Sec. 206. Prohibition on N-Number Profiteering.

This section prohibits an individual from reserving an aircraft registration number without certifying they intend to use the number either immediately on a specific aircraft or for future use on an aircraft owned or controlled, or intended to be owned or controlled, by the individual.

An individual may transfer a reserved registration number to another person so long as the transferor does not impose a cost on the transaction that exceeds the amount paid to initially reserve the number and the transferee certifies as such.

Sec. 207. Accountability for Aircraft Registration Numbers.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to review the process for reserving aircraft registration numbers to ensure that such process offers equal opportunity for members of the public to obtain specific aircraft registration numbers.

Sec. 208. Timely Resolution of Investigations.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to issue a final determination on any investigation into a person or entity left open for more than two years, unless the FAA Administrator determines after a review of the facts that such time to perform the investigation is insufficient.

Sec. 209. Expansion of Volunteer Pilot Organization Definition.

This section amends Section 821 of the *FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012* to modify the definition of a “volunteer pilot organization” to expand the scope of charitable transportation that may be conducted for purposes of allowing reimbursement for fuel costs and airport fees attributed to a charitable flight operation, which includes: 1) assisting individuals accessing medical care; 2) delivering organs and other medical aid; and 3) certain disaster relief efforts.

Sec. 210. Charitable Flight Fuel Reimbursement Exemptions.

This section deems that exemptions granted to volunteer pilot organizations to reimburse pilots providing charitable transportation will be valid for five years.

Sec. 211. GAO Report on Charitable Flights.

This section requires the Comptroller General to initiate a review of charitable flights, including: 1) a review of all applicable laws, regulations, policies, legal opinions, and guidance pertaining to charitable flights and the operations of such flights; 2) an assessment of petitions for exemption from the regulation that prohibits reimbursement for fuel costs for private pilots; and 3) such flights conducted without an exemption from the regulation that prohibits reimbursement for fuel costs for private pilots.

Sec. 212. All Makes and Models Authorization.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to reestablish the authorization for all types and makes of certain experimental single and multiengine piston powered aircraft.

Sec. 213. Response to Letter of Investigation.

This section amends section 2(b) of the *Pilot’s Bill of Rights* to ensure that an individual has not less than 30 days to respond to Letter of Investigation from the FAA Administrator after receipt of such Letter.

Subtitle B – General Aviation Safety

Sec. 221. ADS-B Safety Enhancement Incentive Program.

This section establishes a rebate program to incentivize certain general aviation aircraft owners and operators to purchase and install safety enhancing ADS-B technology on their aircraft. The amount of a rebate is equal to the lesser of the cost of purchasing such technology or \$2,000 and it must be redeemed or presented for payment within 180 days of issuance.

Sec. 222. GAO Report on ADS-B Technology.

This section requires the Comptroller General to conduct a study on ADS-B equipage and usage rates across the active general aviation fleet in the United States and ways of further incentivizing equipage.

Sec. 223. Protecting General Aviation Airports from FAA Closure.

This section ensures the FAA will only permit grant obligated airports to close if the Secretary of Transportation ensures that the closure: will not significantly impair the aeronautical purpose of an airport; will not result in the permanent closure of an airport (unless the Secretary determines that the waiver will directly facilitate the construction of a replacement airport); or is necessary to protect or advance the civil aviation interests of the United States.

Sec. 224. Ensuring Safe Landings During Off-Airport Operations.

This section prohibits the FAA from applying section 91.119 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, in any manner that requires a pilot to continue a landing that is unsafe.

Sec. 225. Airport Diagram Terminology.

This section requires the Administration to update certain Administration policy and guidance to ensure the clear and consistent use of terms to delineate the types of parking available to general aviation pilots.

Sec. 226. Alternative ADS-B Technologies for Use in Certain Small Aircraft.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to publish within three years a list of alternative ADS-B technologies for use in certain small aircraft so that such aircraft may voluntarily broadcast positioning to other aircraft in non-rule airspace.

Sec. 227. Airshow Safety Team.

This section requires the FAA Administrator, in partnership with industry, to establish as a part of the General Aviation Joint Safety Committee an Airshow Safety Team focused exclusively on airshow and aerial event safety.

Sec. 228. Tower Marking Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to issue a notice of proposed rulemaking to implement section 2110 of the *FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016* (49 U.S.C. 44718 note) within one year.

Subtitle C – Improving FAA Services

Sec. 241. Aircraft Registration Validity During Renewal.

This section would permit an aircraft to be operated on or after the expiration date found on the certificate of registration issued for such aircraft as if it were not expired, so long as the operator is awaiting a pending registration renewal application and meets additional criteria. This section would not permit any person to operate an aircraft with an expired registration if the FAA Administrator has denied an application to renew the registration of such aircraft.

Sec. 242. Temporary Airman Certificates.

This section provides that an individual may obtain a temporary airman certificate from the FAA Administrator while waiting for a permanent one to replace a lost or stolen airman certificate. This section also requires the individual to subsequently destroy the temporary airman certificate upon receipt of the permanent replacement certificate.

Sec. 243. Flight Instruction or Testing.

This section deems that certain individuals who provide flight instruction or testing are not operating an aircraft carrying persons or property for hire.

Sec. 244. Letter of Deviation Authority.

This section excludes a flight instructor, registered owner, lessor, or lessee of an aircraft from the requirement to obtain a letter of deviation authority from the FAA Administrator to allow, conduct, or receive flight training, checking, and testing in a covered aircraft if no person advertises the aircraft or instruction as available for those activities; the flight instructor is not providing both the training and the aircraft; and no person receives compensation for use of the aircraft during those activities, other than expenses owed for operating, owning, and maintaining the aircraft.

Sec. 245. National Coordination and Oversight of Designated Pilot Examiners.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish a program or office to provide National coordination and oversight of designated pilot examiners (DPEs). This section further requires the established program or office to coordinate with Flight Standards District Offices, DPE managing specialists, and aviation industry stakeholders, including representatives of the general aviation community to consider (or reconsider) implementing the final recommendations report issued by the DPE Reforms Working Group.

Sec. 246. BasicMed for Examiners Administering Tests or Proficiency Checks.

This section would allow a pilot examiner to perform authorized examiner duties under BasicMed so long as the examiner can otherwise act as pilot-in-command under BasicMed in the aircraft being used for the exam.

Sec. 247. Designee Locator Tool Improvements.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to update the designee locator search tool to ensure that it has improved search functionalities recommended by the Women in Aviation Advisory Board and DPE Reforms Working Group. These include filtering a search for an aviation medical examiner by sex, if such information is available; displaying credentials and aircraft qualifications of a designated pilot examiner; and displaying the scheduling availability of a designated pilot examiner.

Sec. 248. Deadline to Eliminate Aircraft Registration Backlog.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to take such actions as may be necessary to reduce and maintain the aircraft registration and recordation backlog at the Civil Aviation Registry so that, on average, applications are processed no later than 10 business days after receipt.

Sec. 249. Part 135 Air Carrier Certificate Backlog.

This section sets the goal of reducing the backlog of air carrier certificate applications under part 135 at an average certificate processing goal of less than 60 days within one year of enactment and an average of less than 30 days processing goal within two years of enactment.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to convene a working group to make recommendations to improve the aircraft conformity process for existing part 135 air carriers and operators and to study and review methods to modernize and improve the air carrier certification process under part 135.

Sec. 250. Logging Flight Time Accrued in Certain Public Aircraft.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, as required in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018*, to issue a final rule to allow a pilot conducting certain public aircraft operations under the direct operational control of forestry and fire protection agencies to log flight time accrued in such aircraft. If the FAA Administrator fails to issue the rulemaking, the FAA Administrator would be prohibited from enforcing existing prohibitions pertaining to such actions against a pilot conducting public aircraft operations under the direct operational control of forestry and fire protection from logging flight time.

Sec. 251. Flight Instructor Certificates.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to issue a final rule for the rulemaking activity titled “Removal of the Expiration Date on a Flight Instructor Certificate” (RIN 2120-AL25), not later than 36 months after the date of enactment of the Act. Such rulemaking would require the FAA Administrator to remove the expiration date on a flight instructor certificate, among other things.

In the event the FAA Administrator fails to complete the required rulemaking, an individual holding a valid flight instructor certificate as of the date that is 36 months after the date of enactment may exercise the privileges of the certificate regardless of whether the certificate subsequently expires until the FAA Administrator issues the required rulemaking.

Sec. 252. Consistency of Policy Application in Flight Standards and Aircraft Certification.

This section requires the Inspector General (IG) of the DOT to initiate audits of the Flight Standards and Aircraft Certification Services, and the personnel of such offices, on the consistency of policy and regulatory interpretation and the application of policies, orders, and guidance. In conducting the audits, the IG is required to interview a wide array of stakeholders that interface with multiple FAA field and regional offices.

The three audits enumerated would pertain to the FAA’s work with Part 145 repair stations, supplemental type certificate (STC) holders, and technical standard orders (TSO) holders. Subsequently, this section requires a report from the IG to Congress for each issue and then requires the FAA Administrator to consider such report’s suggested best practices to ensure consistent application of policies, orders, guidance, and regulations.

Sec. 253. Application of Policies, Orders, and Guidance.

This section adds a new subsection to section 44701 of title 49, United States Code, that requires the FAA Administrator to ensure that policies, orders, and guidance issued are applied equally and consistently and are not altered without consultation. This section also requires the FAA Administrator to ensure that officials are properly documenting findings and decisions throughout a project to avoid disruptions when personnel change.

Sec. 254. Expansion of the Regulatory Consistency Communications Board.

This section amends section 224 of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* by expanding the membership requirements for the Regulatory Consistency Communications Board to include additional FAA offices and by optimizing the functions of the Board.

Sec. 255. Exemption of Fees for Air Traffic Services.

This section requires the FAA to provide or ensure air traffic services and aviation safety support for large, multiday aviation events, including airshows and fly-ins, where the average daily number of manned operations were 1,000 or greater in at least one of the preceding three years, without the imposition or collection of any fee, tax, or other charge for that purpose.

Sec. 256. Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certification Rulemaking Deadline.

This section requires the Administrator to issue a final rule for the rulemaking activity titled “Modernization of Special Airworthiness Certification” (RIN 2120-AL50).

Sec. 257. Termination of Designees.

This section mandates the Administrator update the Administration’s Designee Management Policy to provide for an investigatory process and record keeping requirements when a designee’s termination is being considered. This section also requires the Administrator provide for a review panel to determine whether a termination is appropriate when termination for cause is a possible outcome upon the completion of the investigation. This section would allow for a subsequent review for a designated pilot examiner who was terminated for cause.

Sec. 258. Part 135 Check Airmen Reforms.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to assign to the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) the task of reviewing all regulations and policies related to check airmen for air carrier operations conducted under part 135 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

This section requires the ARAC to produce action-based recommendations based on the activities conducted pursuant to the review and requires the FAA Administrator to implement, as appropriate, such recommendations.

Subtitle D – Other Provisions

Sec. 261. Required Consultation with National Parks Overflights Advisory Group.

This section requires the FAA Administrator and other agencies to consult with the National Parks Overflights Advisory Group as required in existing law.

Sec. 262. Supplemental Oxygen Regulatory Reform.

This section prohibits the application of certain supplemental oxygen mask requirements for pilots on board pressurized aircraft operating under parts 91 (general operating rules applied to all civil aircraft) and 135 (on-demand, unscheduled air service) of the Federal aviation regulations if the aircraft is flying below 41,000 feet.

Sec. 263. Exclusion of Gyroplanes from Fuel System Requirements.

This section clarifies that the crash resistant fuel system requirements in section 44737 of title 49, United States Code, only apply to helicopters by striking the term “rotorcraft” in each instance it appears and inserting “helicopter.”

This section also exempts from the requirements of section 44737 helicopters issued an experimental certificate or operating under a special flight permit.

Sec. 264. Airshow Venue Information, Awareness, Training, and Education Program.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish a program, in cooperation with the National Center for the Advancement of Aerospace, to be known as the “Airshow Venue Information, Awareness, Training, and Education (AVIATE) Program.” This program will provide information to the public, general aviation airports, local officials, and other stakeholders on the benefits of hosting air shows and how to host and execute such shows safely, among other things.

Sec. 265. Low Altitude Rotorcraft and Powered-Lift Operations.

This section requires the FAA Administrator within three years to establish or update low altitude routes and flight procedures to ensure safe rotorcraft and powered-lift aircraft operations within Class B airspace of the National airspace system.

Sec. 266. BasicMed in North America.

This section instructs the FAA Administrator to seek to facilitate the recognition of BasicMed medical qualifications with civil aviation authorities in Canada and such other foreign countries the FAA Administrator determines are appropriate.

Sec. 267. Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to continue to partner with industry and other Federal government stakeholders to carry out the Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions Initiative (EAGLE Initiative).

This section specifies that the FAA Administrator shall take such actions as may be necessary to facilitate: 1) the safe elimination of the use of leaded aviation gasoline by piston-engine aircraft by the end of 2030 without adversely affecting the piston-engine aircraft fleet; 2) the approval of unleaded alternatives to leaded aviation gasoline for use in all piston-engine aircraft types and piston-engine types; 3) the implementation of the requirements of section 431 as they relate to the continued availability of aviation gasoline; 4) efforts to make approved unleaded gasoline widely available at airports; and 5) the development and implementation of a transition plan to safely expedite the transition of the piston-engine general aviation aircraft fleet to unleaded fuels by 2030.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to develop and implement a transition plan to safely expedite the transition of piston-engine aircraft to unleaded fuels by 2030. In developing such plan, the FAA Administrator must consult aviation stakeholders and consider the following: 1) progress of the EAGLE Initiative; 2) the evaluation and development of fuel storage infrastructure to support the storage and distribution of unleaded fuels; 3) best practices for protecting against exposure to lead contamination on airfields; 4) efforts to address supply chain issues inhibiting timely distribution of unleaded fuels; and 5) efforts to educate pilots and aircraft owners on how to safely transition to unleaded fuels.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to develop materials that map or otherwise clearly convey the availability of unleaded fuels at airports. The FAA Administrator must brief the appropriate Committees of Congress not later than 60 days after publication of the plan.

Title III: Aerospace Workforce

Subtitle A – Growing the Talent Pool

Sec. 301. Extension of the Aviation Workforce Development Programs.

This section amends section 625 (the Aviation Workforce Development Programs) of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* to reauthorize funding levels for the aviation maintenance program and the aircraft pilot program at \$15 million respectively for each of FYs 2024 through 2026.

This section also authorizes funding for an aviation manufacturing workforce development program at \$15 million for the program for each of FYs 2024 through 2026.

Sec. 302. Improving Aviation Workforce Development Programs.

This section amends section 625 of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* by establishing a third workforce development program for aviation manufacturing to invest in the education and recruitment of aviation manufacturing workers and support the development of the aviation manufacturing workforce.

This section increases the maximum award limit for all three workforce development programs to \$750,000 (up from \$500,000) and provides a 20 percent set-aside for the Willa Brown Aviation Education Program.

This section updates the eligible entities and project eligibilities for the aviation maintenance and aircraft pilot programs, and harmonizes such eligible entities across each program, where appropriate.

Sec. 303. National Center for the Advancement of Aerospace.

This section creates the National Center for the Advancement of Aerospace (NCAA), an independent, Federally chartered non-profit entity that serves to support and promote aviation workforce development and aviation education.

This section requires the NCAA to perform certain duties to fulfill the Center's purpose, which includes administering on behalf of the DOT Secretary the newly established Cooperative Aviation Recruitment, Enrichment, and Employment Readiness (CAREER) Program, the successor to the Aviation Workforce Development Program. The section also establishes a council to aid both the Secretary and the NCAA in carrying out the CAREER program by reviewing grant applications and recommending grant recipients.

This section requires the NCAA to report to Congress annually on the activities of the Center and the CAREER grant program, among other things.

This section authorizes the following amounts to be appropriated from the AATF to fund the NCAA: \$10 million for each FY 2024 through 2026, and \$11 million for FY 2027 and FY 2028.

Sec. 304. Cooperative Aviation Recruitment, Enrichment, and Employment Readiness Program.

This section establishes the Cooperative Aviation Recruitment, Enrichment, and Employment Readiness (CAREER) Program, the successor to the Aviation Workforce Development Programs, to support the education, recruitment, training, and retention of future aviation professionals and the development of a robust United States aviation workforce.

This section requires the Secretary to partner with the CAREER council (established as part of the NCAA) in administering the CAREER program and to establish a solicitation, review, and evaluation process that to ensure awards are made to eligible entities with proposals that have adequate merit and relevancy to the mission of the program and the NCAA.

This section requires the Secretary to impose reasonable reporting and monitoring requirements for grant recipients to measure relevant outcomes for each program.

This section authorizes \$50 million to be appropriated for the CAREER program in each of FYs 2027 and 2028.

Sec. 305. Repeal of Duplicative or Obsolete Workforce Programs.

This section repeals the FAA's airway science curriculum grant program and the advanced training facilities program for maintenance technicians for air carrier aircraft.

Sec. 306. Civil Airmen Statistics.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to publish the United States Civil Airmen Statistics monthly (rather than on an annual basis) and expands data criteria. This section also requires the FAA Administrator to establish a web-based dashboard to present this data and findings.

Sec. 307. Bessie Coleman Women in Aviation Advisory Committee.

This section establishes the Bessie Coleman Women in Aviation Advisory Committee to advise the DOT Secretary and the FAA Administrator on the recruitment, retention, employment, education, training, well-being, and treatment of women in the aviation industry and in aviation-focused Federal civil service positions.

This section specifies the Committee’s activities and certain functions it may perform in carrying out taskings by the Secretary. The Committee is also required to submit reports to Congress.

This section sunsets the Committee on the last day of the eight-year period beginning on the date of the initial appointment of the members of the Committee.

Sect. 308. Establishing a Comprehensive Web-Based Aviation Resource Center.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to partner with the NCAA to establish a high-quality, web-based resource center that provides streamlined public access to information on aviation career resources, apprenticeships, and related curricula for students and teachers, among other things.

Sec. 309. Direct Hire Authority from UAS Collegiate Training Initiative.

This section provides authority to the FAA Administrator to hire graduates or near-graduates in good standing from eligible institutions of higher education under the Unmanned Aircraft System Collegiate Training Initiative. This section sunsets the FAA Administrator’s direct hire authority on September 30, 2028.

Subtitle B – Improving Training and Rebuilding Talent Pipelines

Sec. 311. Joint Aviation Employment Training Working Group.

This section requires the establishment of an interagency working group to advise the DOT Secretary and the DOD Secretary on matters and policies related to the training and certification of certain aviation professionals to improve career transition between the military and civilian workforces.

Sec. 312. Airman Knowledge Testing Working Group.

This section requires the Administrator to establish a working group under the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to review knowledge testing processes and procedures to improve the facilitation, administration, and accessibility of knowledge tests.

The working group shall also assess opportunities to allow high school students upon successful completion of an aviation maintenance curriculum described in paragraph (1) to take the general written knowledge portion of the mechanic exam.

Sec. 313. Airman Certification System Working Group and Timely Publication of Standards.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to task the Airman Certification System Working Group established under the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee with reviewing Airman Certification Standards to ensure that airman proficiency and knowledge correlates and corresponds to regulations, procedures, equipment, aviation infrastructure, and safety trends.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to publish the process by which the Airman Certification Standards are to be established, updated, and maintained, including related guidance and handbooks.

Sec. 314. Air Traffic Control Workforce Staffing.

This section transfers the responsibility for annual reporting on the Controller Workforce Plan (CWP) from the FAA Administrator to the COO of the Air Traffic Organization. It requires the COO to revise air traffic control hiring plans and staffing standards to ensure the controller and management workforce is adequately staffed to safely and efficiently manage the ATC system.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to set as the hiring target for each of FYs 2024 through 2027 to the maximum number of individuals trained at the FAA Air Traffic Control Academy.

This section requires the COO, in the interim, to adopt and utilize the staffing models and methodologies developed by the Collaborative Resource Workgroup (CRWG) that were recommended in a report submitted to the FAA Administrator and referenced in the CWP submitted to Congress on May 5, 2023.

This section requires the Transportation Research Board (TRB) to compare the Administration's staffing models and methodologies with those developed by the CRWG and determine which staffing model best accounts for the operational staffing needs of the air traffic control system. This section requires the FAA Administrator to adopt the best staffing model identified by the TRB.

Sec. 315. Aviation Safety Workforce Assessment.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to assess, on a recurring basis, staffing levels, critical competencies, and skills gaps of safety critical positions in the Flight Standards Service and Aircraft Certification Service and within other offices of the Administration that support such services.

Sec. 316. Military Aviation Maintenance.

This section requires the interagency working group established in section 311 to evaluate the appropriateness of revising part 65 rules (Federal aviation rules governing the certification of airmen other than flight crewmembers) to create a mechanic written competency test for eligible military maintenance technicians, to develop an Airmen Certification Standard to qualify eligible military technicians, and to allow a certificate of eligibility from the Joint Services Aviation Maintenance Technician Certification Council evidencing completion of a training program.

This section requires the interagency working group to determine whether an expansion of the number of active testing locations operated within military installation testing centers would increase access to testing, as well as how to implement such expansion.

Subtitle C – Engaging and Retaining the Workforce

Sec. 321. Airman’s Medical Bill of Rights.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to develop a document referred to as the “Airman’s Medical Bill of Rights” that details the rights of an individual before, during, and after a medical exam conducted by an Aviation Medical Examiner. This section directs the FAA Administrator to develop a second document to explain the standard procedures performed during a medical examination conducted by an examiner and to make such document readily available to individuals.

Sec. 322. Improved Designee Misconduct Reporting Process.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to establish a streamlined process for individuals involved in incidents of alleged misconduct by a designee to report such incidents in a manner that protects the individual’s privacy and confidentiality.

This section would also require designees to report to the FAA Administrator any arrest, indictment, or conviction for violation of a local, State, or Federal law within a period time to be specified by the FAA Administrator.

This section also requires DOT IG to conduct an audit of the reporting process not later than three years after the date on which the FAA Administrator completes the required updates to the reporting process.

Sec. 323. Report on Safe Uniform Options for Certain Aviation Employees.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to conduct a review to determine whether major commercial airline carriers and repair stations have in place uniform policies and offerings that ensure pregnant employees can perform required duties safely. This section requires the FAA Administrator to brief Congress on the results of the review within two years.

Sec. 324. Extension of Samya Rose Stumo National Air Grant Fellowship Program.

This section extends the authorization for the Samya Rose Stumo National Air Grant Fellowship Program through FY 2028.

Sec. 325. Promotion of Civil Aeronautics and Safety of Air Commerce.

This section makes conforming edits associated with sections 326 and 502 of the bill.

Sec. 326. Educational and Professional Development.

This section describes the efforts the FAA shall undertake to promote and support the education and professional development of persons in the aviation sector, schools, or other organizations.

Sec. 327. Human Factors Professionals.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish a work code for human factors professionals.

Sec. 328. Aeromedical Innovation and Modernization Working Group.

This section establishes a working group to review the medical processes, policies, and procedures of the Administration and to make recommendations to the FAA Administrator to ensure the timely and efficient certification of airmen. This section requires the working group to assess the special issuance process, determine the appropriateness of expanding the list of medical conditions an Aviation Medical Examiner can issue a certificate, and to evaluate certain medications and treatments approved for use by airmen, among other activities.

This section also establishes a pilot mental health task group responsible for developing and providing recommendations related to supporting the mental health of pilots. Within two years of its establishment, the task group must submit a report to the DOT Secretary and Congress on its findings.

Sec. 329. Frontline Manager Workload Study.

This section directs the COO of the Air Traffic Organization to conduct a study on frontline manager workload challenges in air traffic control facilities. The COO must submit a report to Congress on its findings.

Sec. 330. Age Standards for Pilots.

This section amends Section 44729 of title 49, United States Code to increase the mandatory retirement age for pilots conducting operations under part 121 to 67 years of age (up from 65 years of age). This section provides retroactive application of the change to the mandatory retirement age so that a person who has attained 65 years of age on or before the date of enactment of the Act may return to service as a pilot for an air carrier engaged in covered operations.

This section prohibits an air carrier engaged in covered operations from requiring an employed pilot to serve until they attain 67 years of age.

Title IV: Airport Infrastructure

Subtitle A – Airport Improvement Program Modifications

Sec. 401. AIP Definitions.

This section modifies and expands various definitions applicable to the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), including the establishment of a heliport and vertiport definition and clarification that certain airport development projects that are capable of sustaining commercial operations after a natural disaster are AIP eligible.

Sec. 402. Revenue Diversion Penalty Enhancement.

This section doubles the maximum penalty for an airport that illegally diverts airport revenue.

Sec. 403. Extension of Competitive Access Report Requirement.

This section extends the requirement that medium and large hub airports file competitive access reports if they are unable to accommodate a request from an air carrier for additional gates.

Sec. 404. Renewal of Certain Leases.

This section permits an airport to renew certain nominal rate leases with National Guard units without violating revenue diversion restrictions.

Sec. 405. Community Use of Airport Land.

This section prevents certain airports with parks on airport property from having to close the parks as a result of FAA requirements.

Sec. 406. Price Adjustment Provisions.

This section allows the DOT Secretary to incorporate price adjustment provisions into an AIP grant agreement to account for labor or material cost inflation.

Sec. 407. Allowable Project Costs and Letters of Intent.

This section allows an airport to incur utility relocation and work site preparation costs in advance of an AIP grant agreement and makes various technical amendments.

Sec. 408. Small Airport Letters of Intent.

This section requires the FAA to issue AIP letters of intent (LOIs) to small airports. Under an LOI, the FAA agrees in advance to provide funding for an airport project, allowing an airport to plan large capital projects proactively and receive better financing terms from the market. LOIs are currently restricted to large airports. This section will require the FAA to issue \$100 million in small airport LOIs annually beginning in FY 2028, giving small airports more certainty about when they will be able to complete major projects like runway extensions and rehabilitation.

Sec. 409. Prohibition on Use of AIP Funds to Procure Certain Passenger Boarding Bridges.

This section prohibits AIP funds from being used to purchase certain Chinese manufactured jet bridges.

Sec. 410. Fuel Infrastructure.

This section makes the installation of unleaded aviation gasoline fueling systems and fueling systems for type certificated hydrogen aircraft AIP eligible.

Sec. 411. Apportionments.

This section revises AIP apportionment formulas.

Major revisions in subsection (a) include increasing the minimum primary airport apportionment from \$1 million to \$1.3 million and eliminating the “cliff” for small commercial service airports whose passenger enplanements fell below 10,000. Instead, commercial service airports will receive funding on a sliding scale that ramps up from the \$150,000 non-primary entitlement to the \$1.3 million minimum primary apportionment, depending on the number of enplaned passengers. The section also increases the cargo airport apportionment to four percent of AIP and

allows airports with more than 25,000,000 pounds of total landed weight to receive cargo apportionments.

Major revisions in subsection (b) include increasing the general aviation apportionment from 20 percent to 25 percent of AIP. This section also allows general aviation apportionment funding in United States territories to be used for any airport in the territory.

Sec. 412. PFC Turnback Reduction.

This section reduces the amount of AIP apportionment funding a large or medium hub airport is required to turn back if it charges a passenger facility charge of \$4.50 from 75 percent to 60 percent, which will increase the amount of AIP apportionment funding those airports receive.

Sec. 413. Transfer of AIP Supplemental Funds to Formula Program.

This section reduces the authorization for AIP supplemental discretionary funds by more than 90 percent in order to make such funds available for the AIP formula program. The remaining authorization for supplemental funds is prioritized for runway safety projects.

Sec. 414. Small Airport Fund.

This section accounts for the reduction in PFC turnback funds flowing into the small airport fund by diverting 50 percent of non-primary entitlement carryover funds into the small airport fund. This section also simplifies the distribution formula for the fund. Finally, this section creates a five percent set-aside for the construction of small general aviation hangars and a five percent set-aside for aprons intended to be used for itinerant general aviation parking.

Sec. 415. Revision of Discretionary Categories.

This section revises the formulas and eligibilities in AIP discretionary categories. This section increases the number of projects eligible to be funded under the existing environmental programs set-aside while both raising the floor and lowering the ceiling on category funding. This section also lowers the maximum amount that can be spent under the environmental set-aside from \$300 million to \$200 million while raising the minimum floor for that set-aside to \$150 million.

Sec. 416. Terminal Development.

This section removes most restrictions on the kinds of terminal development projects AIP can be used for, reducing the need for airports to segment terminal projects to comply with program requirements.

Sec. 417. State block grant program.

This section revises provisions relating to the State Block Grant Program under which States administer and disburse general aviation airport funding.

Subsection (a) increases the Federal share of airport projects in state block grant States from 90 percent to 91 percent to account for administrative costs associated with running the program.

Subsection (b) requires the FAA to provide recurring training on state block grant program administrative requirements, including when there is a significant change to the program.

Subsection (c) requires the DOT Secretary to enter into memoranda of agreement with state block grant States to delineate FAA and State responsibilities under the program. The subsection also requires the FAA to accept State documentation that is equivalent to the documentation that FAA itself would produce for a similar decision.

Sec. 418. Innovative Financing Techniques.

This section authorizes the DOT Secretary to approve AIP grants for projects that use innovative financing techniques.

Sec. 419. Long-Term Management Plans.

This section adds as an additional priority consideration for airport funding under the zero-emission vehicle program the development of a long-term management plan for eligible vehicles and equipment.

Sec. 420. Alternative Project Delivery.

This section expands an existing alternative project delivery program and allows for the FAA to approve AIP grants.

Sec. 421. Nonmovement Area Surveillance Surface Display Systems Pilot Program.

This section extends a *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* pilot program that allows airports to use AIP funds to acquire nonmovement area surveillance systems.

Sec. 422. Repeal of Obsolete Criminal Provisions.

This section repeals an obsolete criminal provision relating to FAA construction of international airport facilities.

Sec. 423. Limitation on Certain Rolling Stock Procurements.

This section applies an existing Federal Transit Administration (FTA) prohibition on using Federal funds to acquire Chinese rolling stock to AIP.

Sec. 424. Regulatory Application.

This section requires the FAA to consider the extent to which communities in Alaska are not connected to the ground transportation system when administering AIP.

Sec. 425. National Priority System Formulas.

This section directs the FAA to update its formulas for determining AIP grant priorities assigned to different projects.

Sec. 426. Minority and Disadvantaged Business Participation.

This section finds that there remains a compelling need for the continuation of the airport disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) program and the airport concessions DBE program.

Sec. 427. Airport Access Roads in Remote Locations.

This section extends the applicability of a provision in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* that allows AIP funds to be used to construct certain airport access roads in noncontiguous States.

Sec. 428. Limited regulation of non-Federally sponsored property.

This section clarifies a provision in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* that prohibits the DOT from regulating, directly or indirectly, the acquisition, use, lease, transfer, or disposal of airport property by an airport owner or operator if the land was not purchased with Federal funds, except to ensure airport safety and efficiency is maintained and that fair market value is received.

Sec. 429. Motorcoach Enplanement Pilot Program.

This section allows airports to count passengers who pass through security and board motorcoaches to other airports to be counted as enplaned passengers for purposes of AIP apportionment funding through FY 2028.

Sec. 430. Populous Counties Without Airports.

This section requires the FAA to include a new airport in the National plan of integrated airport systems if the airport is located in the most populous county of a state that does not have a listed airport if it meets certain criteria.

Sec. 431. Continued Availability of Aviation Gasoline.

This section requires that airports that had aviation gasoline available in 2018 continue to make aviation gasoline, including leaded or unleaded gasoline, available for purchase.

Sec. 432. AIP Handbook Update.

This section requires the FAA to update the AIP handbook to account for legislative changes to the program. It also requires that the FAA consult with airport stakeholders in developing the handbook and to release a draft handbook for public comment.

Sec. 433. GAO Audit of Airport Financial Reporting Program.

This section requires the Comptroller General to audit the FAA's airport financial reporting program, under which airports are required to provide certain financial data to the FAA on an annual basis.

Sec. 434. GAO Review of Nonaeronautical Revenue Streams at Airports.

This section requires the Comptroller General to review nonaeronautical revenue streams at airports and to assess different opportunities for airports to increase their nonaeronautical revenue.

Sec. 435. Maintaining Safe Fire and Rescue Staffing Levels.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to update airport firefighting and rescue requirements to ensure certain airports have basic level Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training for at least one first responder, consistent with best practices.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to evaluate present-day airport environments and determine if current staffing requirements are sufficient.

Sec. 436. GAO Study of On-Site Airport Generation.

This section requires the Comptroller General to study the feasibility of certain on-site power generation solutions at airports and submit a report to Congress on its findings.

Sec. 437. Transportation Demand Management at Airports.

This section requires the Comptroller General to study and issue a report on the efficacy of transportation demand management strategies at United States airports. In this section, the term “transportation demand management strategy” means the use of planning, programs, policy, marketing, communications, incentives, pricing, data, and technology to optimize travel modes, routes used, departure times, and number of trips.

Sec. 438. Coastal Airports Assessment.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers to assess the resiliency of United States coastal airports and submit a report to Congress on the findings and related recommendations.

Sec. 439. Airport Investment Partnership Program.

This section amends the Airport Investment Partnership Program giving the DOT Secretary the ability to conduct a benefit-cost analysis during the approval of an application. If conducted, the benefit-cost analysis must be completed within 60 days of submission or 60 days after all required information is submitted to the Secretary.

Sec. 440. GAO Study on Per-Trip Airport Fees for TNC Consumers.

This section tasks the Comptroller General with studying the fees that airports charge customers of transportation network companies.

Sec. 441. Special Rule for Reclassification of Certain Unclassified Airports.

Under this section, a privately owned reliever airport that is not identified in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems may submit to the DOT Secretary a request to reclassify the airport according to criteria used to classify a publicly owned airport. In submitting such a request, the airport shall provide a sworn statement, along with the appropriate documentation, to demonstrate the airport satisfies the requirements to be classified as “local” or “basic” if the airport was publicly owned. Airports must also submit a report that identifies the role of the airport to the aviation system and describes the long-term fiscal viability of the airport.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to complete an eligibility review within 60 days of receiving such reclassification request from a privately owned reliever airport. When conducting the eligibility review, the Secretary may require the airport to provide information on the possibility for obtaining a public sponsor; however, the Secretary may not require the airport to obtain a public sponsor.

This section also directs the Secretary to grant requests within 60 days of receiving the request if the request includes the appropriate information (as defined under this section) and the airport passes the eligibility review. An airport that does not pass the eligibility review, performed by the Secretary, may submit a corrective action plan that resolves the shortcomings identified by the eligibility review and proves corrective actions have been completed by the airport. Lastly, this section dictates that the reclassification of privately owned reliever airports shall take effect before September 30, 2026, for an airport that passes the eligibility review and before September 30, 2027, for requests granted after the submission of a corrective action plan.

Sec. 442. Permanent Solar Powered Taxiway Edge Lighting Systems.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to publish an engineering brief on the acceptable use of solar-powered taxiway edge lighting systems at nonprimary airports.

Sec. 443. Secondary Runways.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to consider allowing for the use of funds from the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* for the extension of secondary runways at non-hub or small-hub airports.

Sec. 444. Increasing the Energy Efficiency of Airports and Meeting Current and Future Electrical Power Demands.

This section amends Section 47140 of title 49, United States Code, to include present and future power demands for airside and landside operations in airport energy assessments. This section further amends section 47140 to include airside energy projects as an eligible project.

Sec. 445. Electric Aircraft Infrastructure Pilot Program.

This section establishes a five-year pilot program allowing up to 10 eligible airports to acquire, install, and operate charging equipment for electric aircraft and to construct or modify related infrastructure to support such equipment.

Sec. 446. Curb Management Practices.

This section clarifies that nothing in this Act shall prevent an airport from implementing curb management practices or from enforcing curb zones at an airport.

Subtitle B – Passenger Facility Charge

Sec. 461. PFC Application Approvals.

This section expands the eligible uses of Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs) to include “airport-related projects.”

Sec. 462. PFC Authorization Pilot Program Implementation.

This section requires the implementation of the PFC authorization pilot program, which would allow airports to file a notice of their intent to impose a PFC rather than file an application to do so. The pilot program maintains all presently required air carrier consultation and comment requirements and permits the DOT Secretary to block an airport’s imposition of a PFC subject to further review.

Subtitle C – Noise and Environmental Programs and Streamlining

Sec. 471. Streamlining Consultation Process.

This section clarifies that the DOT Secretary may consult with the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency on runway construction or extension projects.

Sec. 472. Repeal of Burdensome Emissions Credit Requirements.

This section repeals requirements that airports receive emissions credits when they receive AIP grants for certain environmental projects.

Sec. 473. Expedited Environmental Review and One Federal Decision.

This section reforms and expands the applicability of FAA's expedited environmental review process and implements the major components of One Federal Decision. The process will apply to all airport capacity enhancement projects, terminal development projects, and general aviation projects, as well as certain important aviation safety projects. The section directs the FAA to take the lead on coordinating and scheduling the environmental review process and to ensure that environmental reviews are occurring concurrently with each other.

Sec. 474. Subchapter III Definitions.

This section makes minor amendments to definitions applicable to subchapter III of chapter 471 of title 49, United States Code.

Sec. 475. Pilot Program Extension.

This section extends the authorization of the environmental mitigation pilot program established in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018*.

Sec. 476. Part 150 Noise Standards Update.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to review and revise part 150 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, to reflect all relevant laws and regulations, including part 161 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

In clarifying existing and future noise policies and standards, the FAA Administrator is required to seek feedback from airports, airport users, and individuals living in the vicinity of airports.

This section also directs the FAA Administrator to brief the appropriate Committees of Congress every six months on the review conducted under this section. The briefing requirement sunsets on September 30, 2028.

Sec. 477. Reducing Community Aircraft Noise Exposure.

This section mandates that the FAA Administrator take the following actions to reduce undesirable aircraft noise when implementing or revising a flight procedure: the FAA Administrator should implement flight procedures that mitigate the impact of aircraft noise, work with airport sponsors and impacted neighborhoods in establishing or modifying arrival and departure routes, and discourage local encroachment of residential or other buildings near airports.

Sec. 478. Categorical Exclusions.

This section increases the number of FAA activities that are presumed to be covered by categorical exclusions for purposes of the *National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*.

Subsection (a) creates a categorical exclusion for airport projects that receive less than \$6 million in Federal funding, similar to Federal highway projects.

Subsection (b) creates a categorical exclusion for the rebuilding of airport infrastructure that is damaged or destroyed in a natural disaster.

Subsection (c) clarifies that the standard “extraordinary circumstances” exception applies to categorical exclusions created under this section.

Sec. 479. Critical Habitat On or Near Airport Property.

This section requires the FAA to coordinate with other Federal agencies to ensure the designation of critical habitat for endangered species does not create conflicting regulatory requirements for airports or jeopardize aviation safety.

Sec. 480. Updating Presumed to Conform Limits.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to update presumed to conform limits to include the construction of aircraft hangars and airport rescue and firefighting facilities.

Sec. 481. Recommendations on Reducing Rotorcraft Noise in District of Columbia.

This section requires the Comptroller General to study options to reduce rotorcraft noise in the District of Columbia, including consideration of changes to military operations and alternative methods for emergency response and law enforcement operations.

Sec. 482. UFP Study.

This section requires a National Academies study to examine airborne ultrafine particles (UFP) and their effects on human health, including on susceptible individuals. Among its considerations, the study will provide recommendations on measures to reduce aviation-related emissions.

Sec. 483. Aviation and Airport Community Engagement.

This section requires the FAA to form an Airport Community of Interest Task Force to provide recommendations on multiple aspects of FAA community engagement with airport communities, including with regard to Federal noise abatement efforts, air traffic pattern changes, the Federal noise complaint process, development projects around airports, and improving information sharing. It also directs the FAA to convene annual engagement events in each of its regions, in conjunction with its Regional Community Engagement Officers, to focus on topics of regional interest.

Sec. 484. Community Collaboration Program.

This section requires the FAA to establish a Community Collaboration Program to harmonize policies and procedures across the agency relating to community engagement, including establishing the Airport Community of Interest Task Force as detailed in Sec. 483, hosting regional engagement events referred to in Sec. 483, coordinating with the Air Traffic Organization on engagement efforts related to air traffic procedure changes, oversight of Regional Ombudsmen, increasing the responsiveness of the FAA’s noise complaint process, and

implementing Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommendations related to improving outreach on noise.

Sec. 485. Third Party Study on Aviation Noise Metrics.

This section requires a National Academies study on the efficacy and disadvantages of the Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) noise metric compared to alternatives, including for assessing the impacts of nighttime noise, and any changes that should be made to it.

Sec. 486. Information Sharing Requirement.

This section requires the DOT Secretary (acting through the FAA Administrator) to establish a mechanism to make helicopter noise complaint data accessible to the Administration, helicopter operators operating in the D.C. area, and the public through a website of the Administration.

This section also requires helicopter operators operating in the D.C. area to provide helicopter noise complaint data to the Administration through the process developed under this section.

Title V: Aviation Safety

Subtitle A – General Provisions

Sec. 501. Zero Tolerance for Near Misses, Runway Incursions, and Surface Safety Risks.

This section expands the aviation policy of the United States to expressly include aviation-related projects, activities, and actions as being important in improving the ground operations of aircraft at airports, and requires the FAA to continuously track and evaluate both ground and air traffic activity and incidents at and around airports to mitigate and reduce such incidents from occurring.

This section requires the FAA to establish the Runway Safety Council to develop strategies to address safety risks of ground operations at airports. This section also requires the FAA to identify and deploy technologies, equipment, and systems, such as surface surveillance and detection systems, to enhance the safety of ground operations at all medium hub airports, large hub airports, and other airports that lack airport surface surveillance capabilities and may need such capabilities.

Sec. 502. Global Aviation Safety.

Subsection (a) of this section establishes the rationale for FAA's international presence — providing technical assistance to civil aviation authorities, encouraging the adoption of United States standards and policies, maintaining an aviation regulatory environment that supports the safe travel of Americans abroad, supporting United States manufacturers pursuing validation of aviation products and new markets, and managing bilateral aviation safety agreements with foreign countries.

Subsection (b) requires the FAA to develop a means by which to review the effectiveness of its international offices in executing the mission of the agency and the adequacy of the resources needed for such a mission. This subsection also requires the FAA Administrator to establish new offices based on any identified gaps.

Subsection (c) defines the purpose of multilateral and bilateral aviation safety agreements (BASA) and includes in such purpose: the harmonization of requirements and processes to the benefit of aviation safety and the United States aviation industry; the ability to update BASAs to include new technologies and aviation users; and procedures for holding foreign aviation authorities accountable for adherence to BASAs. This subsection also requires the DOT IG to audit the extent to which the United States and other foreign civil aviation authorities comply with BASAs as they pertain to validating aviation products.

Lastly, subsection (d) requires that the FAA Administrator establish a strategic plan for international engagement which includes maintaining metrics to measure the effectiveness of and compliance with BASAs.

Sec. 503. Availability of Personnel for Inspections, Site Visits, and Training.

This section instructs the FAA Administrator and the DOT Secretary to delegate the authority to authorize travel for certain employees to appropriate supervisors of the Administration, without additional approvals. Travel authorized under this section shall be for the purpose of promoting civil aeronautics and safety of air commerce both domestically and internationally.

Sec. 504. Helicopter Air Ambulance Operations.

This section repeals an outstanding rulemaking activity that is duplicative with other regulatory and oversight actions taken by the FAA regarding helicopter air ambulance operations. This section requires the FAA to inform Congress on how specific risks to air ambulance operations will be captured under their Safety Management System (SMS) programs.

This section also requires the FAA to more routinely publish air ambulance safety information on the FAA's website.

Sec. 505. Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvements.

This requires that all foreign aircraft repair stations be subject to at least one unannounced safety inspection each year and sets forth minimum qualifications for mechanics and others working on United States registered aircraft at foreign repair stations.

This section also directs the FAA to convene a foreign repair station working group with other civil aviation authorities to conduct a review of the certification and oversight of the stations and to identify any future enhancements to strengthen oversight of such stations.

This section further requires that rules mandated in the *FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act of 2016* on drug and alcohol testing and a threat assessment of employees at foreign repair stations are implemented.

Sec. 506. ODA Best Practice Sharing.

This section directs the FAA's Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) Oversight Office to convene a forum for ODA holders, unit members, and other organizational representatives not

less than every two years to share best practices and foster open and transparent communication between Administration safety specialists, ODA holders, and unit members.

Sec. 507. Training of Organization Delegation Authority Unit Members.

This section mandates that approved ODA holders have a recurrent training program for all ODA unit members. The training program established in this section shall cover unit members' professional obligation and responsibilities, the ODA holder's code of ethics, and procedures for reporting safety concerns.

This section also requires the FAA ODA Office to review each ODA holder's recurrent training program to ensure it covers all topics required under this section.

In addition, this section requires that ODA unit members complete ethics training within 60 business days of being designated as an ODA unit member. ODA unit members authorized to perform delegated functions under an ODA prior to the establishment of the training program must complete the training no later than 30 days after such training course is approved by the FAA Administrator and annually thereafter.

Sec. 508. Clarification on Safety Management System Information Disclosure.

This section clarifies that a report, data, or other information submitted for any purpose relating to the development, implementation, and use of a safety management system, including a system required by regulations, that is acceptable to the FAA Administrator, may not be disclosed to the public by the FAA Administrator.

Sec. 509. Extension of Aircraft Certification, Safety, and Accountability Act Reporting Requirements.

This section extends the reporting requirements in the *Aircraft Certification, Safety, and Accountability Act* through 2028.

Sec. 510. Don Young Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative.

This section renames the FAA Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative as the "Don Young Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative" and sets forth objectives to work cooperatively with aviation stakeholders towards the goal of reducing the rate of fatal aircraft accidents by 90 percent from 2019-2033 and eliminating fatal accidents of commercial aircraft by 2033 in Alaska, Hawaii, and the territories of the United States. Furthermore, the section designates the Regional Administrator for the Alaskan Region of the Administration to serve as the Director of the Initiative and requires the Director to build upon the existing initiatives of the FAA Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative.

This section also directs the FAA Administrator to ensure installation and operation of automated weather reporting systems and the reliability and availability of information from those systems. Further, it directs the FAA Administrator to deploy visual weather observation systems and continue to assess the state of weather camera systems. This also requires the FAA Administrator to encourage and incentivize equipage of automatic dependent surveillance broadcast out equipment on commercial aircraft operating in the covered locations.

Finally, this section allows the FAA Administrator to consider hiring locally for safety critical FAA position in the covered locations if the FAA Administrator has determined there are unique circumstances affecting the ability to hire for those positions. It also directs the FAA Administrator to take such actions as may be necessary to implement NTSB recommendations A-22-25 and A-22-26, in coordination with various Alaska stakeholders.

Sec. 511. Continued Oversight of FAA Compliance Program.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to continue the agency-wide evaluation to assess the functioning and effectiveness of the Compliance Program and directs the FAA Administrator to determine the need for long term metrics, if the program ensure the highest level of compliance with safety standards, and if the program has met its stated safety goals and purpose.

Sec. 512. Scalability of Safety Management Systems.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in conducting a rulemaking to require, or implementing a regulation requiring a safety management system, to consider the scalability of such safety management system requirements to the full range of entities in terms of size or complexity.

Sec. 513. Finalize safety management system rulemaking.

This section directs the Administrator to issue a final rule on the SMS notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) no later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act. This section also requires the SMS NPRM to apply to all certificate holders operating under the rules for part 135 or section 91.147 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, as well as certain production and type certificate holders under part 21 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

Sec. 514. Improvements to Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing.

This section would require the FAA to implement improvements to the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing program with respect to safety data sharing and risk mitigation. Required improvements include developing predictive capabilities to anticipate emerging safety risks, establishing a robust process for prioritizing request for safety information, and identifying industry segments not yet included in the program.

Sec. 515. Improvement of Certification Processes.

This section directs the FAA to continually evaluate and improve the process by which they coordinate with, respond to, and consider aircraft certification applications.

This section also requires that the FAA contract with a qualified third-party organization or consortium to evaluate the use of digital tools and software systems that allow for near-real-time and virtual evaluation of an applicant's design, associated documentation, and software or systems products, including the use of digital three-dimensional formats and model-based systems engineering design techniques.

This section requires that the FAA review any recommendations, pursue the implementation of any recommended solutions, and issue updates to guidance and policy documents in order to integrate the use of such solutions.

Sec. 516. Instructions for Continued Airworthiness Aviation Rulemaking Committee.

This section requires that the FAA convene an Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) on instructions for continued airworthiness (ICA). The ARC will evaluate related regulations and guidance material for clarity, the sufficiency of safety and maintenance data used to prepare ICA, the protection of intellectual property, and the harmonization of FAA’s ICA with those of their peer authorities.

This section requires the FAA to update such regulations and guidance material to address the recommendations from the ICA ARC.

Sec. 517. Clarity for Supplemental Type Certificate Requirements.

This section requires the FAA to clarify when a major alteration requires a Supplemental Type Certificate (STC) and when a change can be approved using FAA approved engineering data.

Sec. 518. Use of Advanced Tools in Certifying Aerospace Products.

This section requires the FAA to study and consider the use of advanced tools during flight testing of aviation products to reduce the risk to test pilots and more adequately test the limits of such products, particularly when such tests are done more than once — in company testing and then FAA testing.

This section requires the FAA to issue a report on the results of the assessment and the FAA’s plans to implement such findings.

Sec. 519. Transport Airplane and Propulsion Certification Modernization.

This section requires the FAA to publish a draft rule on transport airplane and propulsion certification modernization which the agency added to its regulatory agenda in 2022. This rule further harmonizes the certification requirements for transport category aircraft with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), codifies common special conditions, and addresses other recommendations of the Aviation Rulemaking and Advisory Committee.

Sec. 520. Engine Fire Protection Standards.

This section requires that the FAA review and compare their application of international airworthiness standards for engine firewalls with the requirements of other civil aviation authorities.

Sec. 521. Risk Model for Production Facility Inspections.

This section requires the FAA to conduct a review of the risk-based model used by FAA certification management offices to inform the frequency of aircraft manufacturing or production facility inspections and update the model to ensure it accounts for risk during periods of increased production.

Sec. 522. Secondary Cockpit Barriers.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to convene an Aviation Rulemaking Committee to review and develop findings and recommendations to require installation of a secondary cockpit

barrier on certain commercial aircraft not covered by any current rules, including the final rule issued recently mandating secondary barriers for certain new aircraft manufactured for delivery.

Sec. 523. Review of FAA Use of Aviation Safety Data.

This section requires that the FAA enter into an agreement with a qualified third-party organization or consortium to review what data the FAA has, how that data is stored and used, and whether the data is complete and useful for the purposes of identifying safety trends and addressing identified risks.

This section requires that the FAA develop and implement a plan based on any recommendations and work with the qualified third-party organization or consortium to implement such plans.

Sec. 524. Part 135 Duty and Rest.

This section requires the FAA to address two recommendations from the Part 135 Pilot Rest and Duty Aviation Rulemaking Committee. Specifically, it requires the FAA to limit the use of ferry flights beyond reasonable duty times, and update policy and guidance on record keeping for part 135 operators. The section further requires the FAA Administrator to ensure that part 135 operators are considering the risk of ferry flights and inadequate flight crew record keeping requirements in their mandated safety management systems.

Sec. 525. Cockpit Voice and Video Recorders.

This section would require the FAA Administrator to complete a rulemaking to require scheduled air carriers to be equipped with a cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder capable of recording the most recent 25 hours of data no later than four years after the date of enactment of this Act. Furthermore, this section prohibits any person from erasing or tampering with any recording on such recorders following an aircraft accident or incident, requires that such cockpit voice recorder has the capability for an operator to use an erasure feature, requires that the manufacturer or the National Transportation Safety Board have access to the software necessary to extract deleted recording data, and require that data on such recorders is not disclosed for uses other than accident or incident investigation purposes.

Finally, this section prohibits cockpit voice recorder recordings from being used by the FAA Administrator or any employer for any certificate action, civil penalty, or disciplinary proceedings against flight crew members.

Sec. 526. Flight Data Recovery from Overwater Operations.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to direct the Aviation Rulemaking and Advisory Committee to provide consensus recommendations for the equipage of flight data recovery for aircraft operated by scheduled air carriers for extended overwater operations. Furthermore, this section requires the FAA Administrator to initiate a rulemaking based on such consensus recommendations, if determined appropriate, no later than one year after receiving any recommendations. Finally, if the FAA Administrator decides not to issue a rulemaking, they must provide a briefing to Congress on the justification for such a decision.

Sec. 527. Emergency Medical Equipment on Passenger Aircraft.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to review and, as appropriate, update regulations regarding emergency medical equipment requirements, and the training required for flight crew for such emergency medical equipment, for scheduled air carriers. Further, this section requires the FAA Administrator to consider the benefits and costs of requiring scheduled air carriers to include new medications and equipment in approved emergency medical kits. Furthermore, it requires the FAA Administrator to consider whether the current requirements for minimum contents of emergency medical kits include appropriate medications to address the emergency medical needs of children and pregnant women, opioid overdose, anaphylaxis, and cardiac arrest. Finally, this section requires the FAA Administrator to consult with associations representing aerospace medical professionals when conducting the review.

Sec. 528. Navigation Aids Study.

This section requires the DOT IG to examine the effects of potentially reclassifying navigation aids from Design Assurance Level-B to Design Assurance Level-A including the cost-benefit, risks, and necessity of such potential reclassification.

Sec. 529. Remote Towers.

This section directs a third party to study: 1) the remote tower pilot program established under the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018*; and 2) remote tower technology in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act. It also directs the FAA to establish certification and operational approval processes for such technology, for use primarily at non-towered, public-use airports.

Sec. 530. Weather Reporting Systems Study.

This section requires the Comptroller General to examine how to improve the procurement, functionality, and sustainability of weather reporting systems to improve the resiliency of weather reporting systems, and to assess alternative means to weather reporting systems that would suffice in obtaining accurate weather data and information.

Sec. 531. GAO Study on Expansion of the FAA Weather Camera Program.

This section directs the Comptroller General to conduct a study on the feasibility and potential safety benefits of expanding the Weather Camera Program of the FAA to locations in the United States that lack weather camera services.

Sec. 532. Audit on Aviation Safety in Era of Wireless Connectivity.

This section mandates the FAA Administrator enter into an agreement with the National Academies to study potential conflicts between uses of radio spectrum by aviators and wireless telecommunications network.

Sec. 533. Ramp Worker Safety Call to Action.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to initiate a Call to Action to bring stakeholders together to share best practices and implement actions to address airport ramp worker safety.

Sec. 534. Safety Data Analysis for Aircraft Without Transponders.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the NTSB Chairman, to collect and analyze data relating to accidents and incidents involving aircraft exempt from air traffic control transponder and altitude reporting equipment and use requirements. It also directs the FAA Administrator, if appropriate, to develop recommendations on how to reduce the number of incidents and accidents associated with such aircraft.

Sec. 535. Crash-Resistant Fuel Systems in Rotorcraft.

This section directs the Administrator to task the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) to review and update the 2018 report of the Rotorcraft Occupation Protection Working Group by reviewing NTSB data from 2016-2023 on post-crash fires in helicopter accidents and determining to what extent crash-resistant fuel systems could have prevented fatalities.

In addition, the ARAC shall develop recommendations to encourage helicopter owners and operators to expedite installation of crash-resistant fuel systems regardless of original certification and manufacture date, and requires the FAA to implement recommendations or work with the United States Helicopter Safety Team, as appropriate, to implement recommendations.

Sec. 536. Reducing Turbulence on Part 121 Aircraft Operations.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to review and implement, as appropriate, the recommendations by the Chair of the NTSB in the “Preventing Turbulence-Related Injuries in Air Carrier Operations Conducted Under Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 121” report issued on August 10, 2021.

This section also mandates the FAA Administrator submit to the appropriate Committees of Congress a report detailing the status of the recommendations made in the safety report. If the FAA Administrator does not implement any of the recommendations made in the safety report, the report to Congress shall contain a description of why such recommendations were not implemented.

Sec. 537. Study on Radiation Exposure.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to enter into an agreement with the National Academies to conduct a study on radiation exposure onboard various aircraft types operated under Part 121 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations. The section requires a report to Congress with recommendations.

Sec. 538. Deterring Crewmember Interference.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to convene a task force to develop standards and best practices relating to suspected violations in interference with cabin or flight crew, security screening personnel, or flight attendants. The task force convened under this section shall be comprised of air carriers, airport sponsors and airport law enforcement agencies, and labor organizations representing air carrier pilots, flight attendants, and customer service representatives employed by air carriers.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to take such actions necessary to brief passengers before takeoff that it is against Federal law to assault or threaten to assault any individuals onboard an aircraft or interfere with duties of a crewmember.

Sec. 539. Cabin Temperature Standards.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to review existing standards produced by industry standards organizations on safe cabin air temperature and assess their validity. If the FAA Administrator determines there is not an appropriate standard to determine unsafe temperatures onboard aircraft, the FAA Administrator may enter into an agreement with the National Academies to conduct a study and provide recommendations to address unsafe cabin temperatures.

Sec. 540. Cabin Air Quality.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to develop a standardized system for flight attendants, pilots, and aircraft maintenance technicians of air carriers to voluntarily report fume events onboard passenger-carrying aircraft.

This section further requires the FAA Administrator to enter into an agreement with the National Academies to study and issue recommendations pertaining to cabin air quality and any risk of, and potential for, persistent and accidental fume events.

Sec. 541. Evacuation Standards for Transport Category Airplanes.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to task the ARAC with reviewing and proposing updates to the evacuation requirements for commercial aircraft and requires the FAA Administrator to issue a final rule not later than 18 months after the date of enactment based on the recommendations provided by the ARAC.

Sec. 542. Lithium-Ion Powered Wheelchairs.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to task the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Administrator of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), to conduct a review of regulations, standards and air carrier policies regarding lithium-ion battery powered wheelchairs and mobility aids. The Committee will provide recommendations to the DOT Secretary to ensure the safe transport of such wheelchairs and mobility aids in aviation. Furthermore, this section also requires the DOT Secretary to notify an air carrier if they do not have a policy pertaining to lithium-ion battery powered wheelchairs and mobility aids in effect.

Sec. 543. National Simulator Program Policies and Guidance.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to review relevant policies and guidance (including all advisory circulars, information bulletins, and directives) pertaining to the National Simulator Program. In conducting the review, the FAA Administrator should consult with representatives of air carriers, flight schools, training centers, and manufacturers and suppliers of flight simulation training devices.

Following the completion of the review, the Administrator shall update, at a minimum, the following advisory circulars: Advisory Circular 120-40B, Advisory Circular 120-45A, Advisory Circular 120-50A, and Advisory Circular 120-63, each of which was issued in the 1990s.

Sec. 544. GAO Study on FAA National Simulator Program.

This section directs the Comptroller General to study the FAA’s National Simulator Program to assess how the program accounts for advancements in technologies pertaining to flight training simulators, the workforce of the Administration tasked with carrying out and supporting the program, and how the program engages with relevant aviation stakeholders. Not later than 18 months after the enactment of this Act, GAO shall submit a report to Congress on its findings.

Sec. 545. GAO Study on FAA Alignment with Best Available Technologies and Standards.

This section tasks Comptroller General to conduct a study on the incorporation of best available technologies into the FAA to increase aviation safety and improve the health and safety of aviation workers. The study shall examine the degree to which the FAA Administrator is enabling the use of technologies used by other air navigation service providers to meet ICAO standards and identify any barriers to the adoption of such technologies.

Sec. 546. Advanced Simulation Training.

This section allows a person applying for an airline transport pilot (ATP) certificate to obtain up to 150 additional hours of the total aeronautical experience requirement in a full flight simulator representing an airplane that provides six-degrees of freedom motion. To be eligible to obtain the additional 150 hours, a person must have completed the hours as part of a FAA approved training course and outside of a restricted-ATP pathway.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to issue a final rule within two years to update the appropriate regulations to reflect changes made by this section. The FAA Administrator is required to consult with the Air Carrier Training Aviation Rulemaking Committee in developing the required rulemaking and in evaluating whether the additional 150 hours may be accrued in a full flight simulator that provides three-degrees of freedom of motion.

Sec. 547. Incremental Safety Improvement.

This section allows the FAA Administrator to consider and approve incremental aircraft design change requests when such a change would improve safety and does not address all non-compliant conditions. This section also specifically enumerates that such changes do not alleviate a certificate holder from addressing all non-compliances.

Subtitle B – Aviation Cybersecurity

Sec. 571. Findings.

This section declares the findings of Congress that the FAA is tasked with the responsibility of regulating the protection against cyber threats that affect aviation safety and the safe, secure, and efficient operation of air navigation services and airspace management.

Sec. 572. Aerospace Product Safety.

This section prescribes that the FAA Administrator is responsible for prescribing regulations and minimum standards for cybersecurity in air commerce. It further provides that the FAA Administrator, in consultation with other agencies, shall have the exclusive rulemaking authority to prescribe regulations for purposes of assuring the cybersecurity of aircraft and related components.

Sec. 573. Federal Aviation Administration Regulations, Policy, and Guidance.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to establish a cybersecurity threat management process to protect the national airspace system from cyber incidents. In establishing such a process, the Administrator will monitor, track, and evaluate the national airspace system cyber environment for cyber incidents to respond to such incidents, as appropriate.

Sec. 574. Civil Aviation Cybersecurity Rulemaking Committee.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to conduct rulemaking proceedings to establish civil aviation cybersecurity standards. In working towards such proceedings, the FAA Administrator will establish an aviation rulemaking committee to develop recommendations on civil aviation cybersecurity standards.

Title VI: Aerospace Innovation

Subtitle A – Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Sec. 601. Definitions.

This section further defines an actively tethered unmanned aircraft system (UAS) to require that such systems maintain safe flight in the event of a power or flight control failure while in-flight, while also requiring such systems be programmed to initiate a controlled landing in the event the tether of an actively tethered unmanned aircraft system separates from the unmanned aircraft component of such system.

Sec. 602. Unmanned Aircraft System Test Ranges.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to carry out a program for testing and evaluation activities at unmanned aircraft system test ranges in furtherance of the safe integration of UAS into the national airspace system.

This section allows the FAA Administrator to establish nonregulatory special use airspace areas, similar to military operations areas and alert areas, to separate and segregate certain unmanned aircraft system testing and evaluation activities from instrument flight rules traffic and to identify for visual flight rules traffic locations where such activities are conducted.

This section also directs the FAA Administrator to use the UAS test ranges, as necessary, for testing and evaluation of counter-UAS systems and solutions.

Sec. 603. Unmanned Aircraft in the Arctic.

This section expands the permitted use of UAS operations in the Arctic to include unmanned aircraft that are 55 pounds or greater.

Sec. 604. Public Safety Use of Tethered UAS.

This section expands the statutory requirements of operating a public actively tethered UAS to non-governmental public safety organizations carrying out public safety operations with actively tethered UAS. This section further clarifies that actively tethered UAS operations shall not be operated greater than 150 feet above ground level, unless granted prior authorization from the FAA Administrator.

Sec. 605. Special Authority for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

This section transfers the special authority granted under section 44807 of title 49, United States Code, from the DOT Secretary to the FAA Administrator. Further, this section directs the Administrator to determine how UAS may operate safely in the national airspace system using a risk-based approach in making such determinations.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish requirements for UAS that may operate safely in the national airspace system, as determined under this section. In establishing such requirements, this section directs the FAA Administrator to take into consideration mitigation measures used by such systems while operating exclusively within the airspace of a Mode C Veil.

This section also explicitly limits its applicability to UAS that do not have established regulations applicable to a proposed operation of such systems.

Sec. 606. Recreational Operations of Drone Systems.

This section permits the FAA Administrator to authorize recreational unmanned aircraft to fly above 400 feet within Class G airspace at fixed sites. This section also directs the FAA Administrator to prioritize FAA Recognized Identification Area (FRIA) requests submitted for fixed sites.

Sec. 607. Airport Safety and Airspace Hazard Mitigation and Enforcement.

This section extends authorities of the FAA's Airport Safety and Airspace Hazard Mitigation and Enforcement program, which was established under sec. 383 of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018*, from 2023 to 2028.

Sec. 608. Applications for Designation.

This section removes the requirement for the FAA Administrator to consider locations that may warrant prohibitions or restrictions of UAS operations in close proximity to a fixed site facility. This section expands sites to be considered under this section to state correctional facilities and eligible outdoor gatherings. Lastly, this section requires the FAA Administrator to publish a NPRM related to the section by March 1, 2024, with the requirement to publish a final rule no later than 16 months after the NPRM.

Sec. 609. Beyond Visual Line of Sight Rulemaking.

This section mandates the FAA Administrator to issue at least one NPRM no later than four months after the date of enactment of this Act, with at least one final rule no later than 16 months after the date of enactment of this Act, for UAS to operate beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) and primarily at or below 400 feet above ground level. The rulemakings require the FAA to

address airworthiness standards for unmanned aircraft, standards for associated elements of such aircraft, and how remote pilots of such aircraft will be qualified to operate such UAS. Additionally, this section enables the FAA Administrator to ensure the compliance of such standards and qualifications through the use of third-party compliance services.

Further, this section requires the FAA Administrator to enable UAS operations for agricultural purposes under a rulemaking, along with the establishment of protocols for networked information exchange, including network-based remote identification for BVLOS operations.

Until the FAA Administrator publishes the final rulemaking required under this section, the Administrator is directed to use the authorities granted section 44807 of title 49, United States Code, to authorize BVLOS UAS operations.

Sec. 610. UAS Traffic Management.

This section allows the FAA Administrator to enter into agreements for UAS stakeholders to provide unmanned aircraft system traffic management (UTM) capabilities or services for advanced UAS operations, including BVLOS operations, one-to-many operations, and aircraft-to-aircraft communications. This section also directs the FAA Administrator to establish and publish UTM standards. Furthermore, the section directs the FAA Administrator to brief Congress on the implementation of the requirements under this section.

Sec. 611. Radar Data Pilot Program.

This section directs the Administrator, in coordination with the DOD Secretary and other relevant Federal agencies, to establish a pilot program to make airspace data feeds containing classified or controlled unclassified information available to qualified users. In this section a qualified user means an entity authorized to receive airspace data feeds containing classified or controlled unclassified information). This section sunsets on October 1, 2028. Furthermore, the section directs the FAA Administrator to brief Congress on the pilot program.

Sec. 612. Electronic Conspicuity Study.

This section directs the Comptroller General to study technologies and methods for UAS to detect and avoid manned aircraft that may lawfully operate below 500 feet above ground level. The study requires the Comptroller General to consult with aviation stakeholder representatives, and to report to Congress on the findings of such study.

Sec. 613. Remote Identification Alternative Means of Compliance.

This section directs the Administrator to review and evaluate the final rule titled “Remote Identification of Unmanned Aircraft” issued on January 15, 2021. In reviewing the final rule, the Administrator shall determine the feasibility and advisability of whether UAS manufacturers and operators can meet the intent of the final rule through alternative means of compliance, including network-based remote identification.

Sec. 614. Part 107 Waiver Improvements.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to use a performance- and risk-based approach in reviewing waiver requests under part 107 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations. In reviewing waiver requests submitted under part 107, the FAA Administrator is directed to improve the

review process, to include not requiring the use of open-ended prompts for requesters to complete where waiver request factors and variables can be standardized. The only time open-ended prompts may be required is for unusual or irregular operations.

This section also requires the FAA Administrator to recognize the safety enhancements of controlled access to property over which an unmanned aircraft flies in assessing whether to approve a waiver.

Additionally, this section directs the FAA Administrator to publish all certificates of waiver and to consider the precedential value of previously approved waivers under part 107 in assessing and approving subsequent waiver requests.

Sec. 615. Acceptable Levels of Risk and Risk Assessment Methodology.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish acceptable levels of risk, and a risk assessment methodology for such levels of risk, to be used in conducting UAS operations. The risk assessment methodology will be used to assist remote pilots in mitigating risk for specific operations and should consider when, where, and how the operation will take place, to include consideration of the nature of detect and avoid mitigation measures.

Sec. 616. Environmental Review.

This section requires the Administrator to publish environmental review guidance specific to UAS and their operations. The purpose of this guidance is to streamline the assessments of required environmental reviews at a programmatic level, including conducting such assessments in tandem with other required reviews associated with UAS operations.

This section also requires the Administrator to establish criteria and standards metrics for determinations around an unmanned aircraft's airworthiness in conjunction with part 36 in title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, including definitive standards for any potential noise impacts and visual impacts related to UAS operations. This section also grants the FAA Administrator relief from the requirement to conduct noise certification for UAS prior to the development of criteria and standards.

Sec. 617. Carriage of Hazardous Materials.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the PHMSA Administrator, to revise processes and put in place special conditions or waivers in operational approvals to allow for the carriage of certain hazardous materials by UAS weighing less than 100 pounds and carrying less than 10 pounds gross weight of limited quantity cargo.

This section also directs the DOT Secretary to revise requirements, guidance, and regulations to allow for the carriage of a de minimis amount of hazardous materials. The Secretary must consider if the hazardous materials are a consumer commodity, whether the materials pose an unreasonable risk to health, safety, or property, and the altitude at which the operations are conducted.

The DOT Secretary must also establish a process by which an individual can petition the Secretary to establish or revise a de minimis amount of hazardous materials.

Sec. 618. Unmanned Aircraft System Use in Wildfire Response.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the United States Forest Service, other Federal agencies and Federal contractors, to develop a plan on the use of UAS by public entities in wildfire response efforts, including wildfire detection, mitigation, and suppression.

The plan, under this section, shall designate areas with a high potential for wildfires where unmanned aircraft systems may operate BVLOS in fire detection, mitigation, and suppression efforts. In addition, the plan shall include a process to facilitate the safe and efficient operation of UAS in wildfire response. The plan, developed under this section, shall be submitted to Congress, and published on a publicly available website of the FAA.

Lastly, this section directs the FAA Administrator to enter into an agreement to provide a liaison to the National Interagency Fire Center to facilitate unmanned aircraft systems wildfire response.

Sec. 619. Pilot Program for UAS Inspections of FAA Infrastructure.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to initiate a pilot program to supplement DOT oversight and inspection activities with UAS, including the inspection of ground-based aviation infrastructure, to increase employee safety, enhance data collection, improve the accuracy of inspections, and reduce the costs associated with such inspections.

Upon the conclusion of the pilot program, the DOT Secretary is required to assess the results of the program and incorporate any benefits of using UAS into DOT's routine activities, to include such activities related to the regular inspection of ground-based aviation infrastructure.

Sec. 620. Drone Infrastructure Inspection Grant Program.

This bill establishes a \$50 million DOT grant program to support the use of drones when inspecting, repairing, or constructing critical infrastructure. Under this program, the DOT Secretary must award grants to state, tribal, and local governments; metropolitan planning organizations; or groups of those entities to purchase and use drones to increase efficiency, reduce costs, improve worker and community safety, reduce carbon emissions, or meet other priorities related to critical infrastructure projects through the use of drones. Grant recipients must use domestically manufactured drones that are made by companies not subject to influence or control from certain foreign entities, including China and Russia.

Sec. 621. Drone Education and Workforce Training Grant Program.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to establish a \$50 million drone education and training program to make grants available to eligible educational institutions for training on eligible small UAS technology.

Sec. 622 Drone Workforce Training Program Study.

This section tasks the Comptroller General to study the effectiveness of the Collegiate Training Initiative Program for Unmanned Aircraft Systems established in the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018*. The Comptroller General shall submit of a report to Congress detailing the findings of such study and any recommendations to improve and expand the Collegiate Training Initiative Program for Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

Sec. 623. UAS Integration Office.

This section clarifies the authorities of the Executive Director of the UAS Integration Office of the FAA to facilitate matters related to UAS within the Administration and to provide recommendations to lines of business within the Administration, as necessary.

Sec. 624. Termination of Advanced Aviation Advisory Committee.

This section terminates the Advanced Aviation Advisory Committee.

Sec. 625. Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish the Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee. The Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee will assist with advising the FAA Administrator on the technical challenges related to the certification and operational standards of highly automated aircraft among other related technical matters. This new committee will be made up of representatives from the UAS industry, community advocates, and certified aviation labor unions. The Committee must submit an annual report to Congress on its activities.

Sec. 626. NextGen Advisory Committee Membership Expansion.

This section expands the membership of the NextGen Advisory Committee to include a representative from both the UAS and powered-lift industries.

Sec. 627. Temporary Flight Restriction Integrity.

This section adds additional requirements the FAA Administrator must ensure when issuing a temporary flight restriction (TFR). When issuing a TFR, the FAA Administrator shall ensure there is a specific and articulable safety or security basis for the size and duration of the restriction. Upon granting such a restriction, the FAA Administrator shall immediately distribute such restriction to aircraft operators through the Notice to Air Mission (NOTAM) system. Such notice shall include the basis for the restriction and how a covered person may operate lawfully within such restriction.

Sec. 628. Interagency Coordination.

This section includes a sense of Congress that the joint DOD – FAA UAS Executive Committee (ExCom) has exceeded the scope of activities and membership of the original intent and taskings. These expansions have resulted in an imbalance in the oversight of certain Federal entities in matters concerning civil aviation safety and security.

This section also directs the FAA Administrator to revise the charter of the ExCom to ultimately achieve the routine access of DOD UAS into the national airspace system, and seek to sunset the ExCom, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, no earlier than two years after the date of enactment.

Sec. 629. Review of Regulations to Enable Unescorted UAS Operations.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, to conduct a review of requirements necessary to permit UAS operated by a Federal agency or an armed service to operate in the national airspace system without the need for an escort by a manned aircraft.

Sec. 630. UAS Operations Over High Seas.

This section clarifies that UAS operations that begin and end within the United States or territorial waters of the United States shall not be considered international flight, even if a flight enters airspace over international waters.

Sec. 631. Beyond BEYOND.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to extend the existing BEYOND program, and no later than two years after the end date of the program’s extension, the Administrator is required to expand the BEYOND program to enable testing of other new and emerging aviation concepts and technologies, including concepts and technologies unrelated to UAS, to ultimately inform policies, rulemaking, and guidance needed to enable these new concepts and technologies.

Sec. 632. UAS Integration Strategy.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to implement the recommendations made by Government Accountability Office (GAO) to the DOT Secretary in a report titled “Drones: FAA should Improve its Approach to Integrating Drones into the National Airspace System” issued in January of 2023. The recommendations call for the development of a comprehensive drone integration strategy and for the FAA to develop ways to more clearly communicate with drone operators.

In addition, the FAA Administrator shall also implement the recommendation made by the DOT OIG contained in the audit report titled “FAA Made Progress Through Its UAS Integration Pilot Program, but FAA and Industry Challenges Remain to Achieve Full UAS Integration” issued in April of 2022. Among its recommendations, the DOT OIG calls for the agency to establish goals, milestones, and performance measures for the BEYOND program.

The FAA Administrator is required to brief the appropriate committees of Congress on the status of such implementation annually.

Sec. 633. Authorization of Appropriations for Know Before You Fly Campaign.

This section authorizes \$1,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2024 through 2028 for the educational campaign Know Before You Fly. This campaign is intended to broaden the public awareness of unmanned aircraft systems.

Sec. 634. Public Aircraft Definition.

This section broadens the definition of a public aircraft to include aviation systems undergoing testing and evaluations at an FAA-authorized UAS test range, infrastructure inspections, or any other activity undertaken by a government entity that the FAA Administrator determines is inherently governmental.

Subtitle B – Advanced Air Mobility

Sec. 651. Definition.

This section defines “powered-lift aircraft.”

Sec. 652. Powered-Lift Aircraft Rulemakings.

This section requires the FAA to publish a final interim regulation for the operations of powered-lift aircraft by the beginning of 2025.

Additionally, this section requires that the FAA initiate additional rulemaking within five years, providing permanent performance-based regulations for the certification and commercial operations of powered lift aircraft.

If the FAA fails to meet the timeline for the publication of an interim regulation, this section sets out specific operating and training rules in order to provide the powered-lift industry a means by which to operate and train personnel until such time as the FAA produces the required regulations.

Sec. 653. Powered-Lift Aircraft Entry into Service.

This section requires the FAA to provide short-term and long-term solutions for the safe integration of powered-lift aircraft into the national airspace, including controlled airspace. This section also requires that the FAA evaluate the impact of such operations on air traffic controllers and the use of other tools to support ATC.

Sec. 654. Sense of Congress on the Preparation for the Entry into Service of Powered-Lift Aircraft.

This section expresses the sense of Congress that the FAA should work with powered-lift aircraft manufacturers and operators and other relevant stakeholders to prepare draft manuals, pilot training programs, and operational documents required to enter service in a timely manner.

Sec. 655. Infrastructure Supporting Vertical Flight.

This section requires the FAA to update the definitions in regulation to include vertiports as a subclass of heliports, include vertiport guidance into their Heliport Design Advisory Circular, and sunset the FAA's Vertiport Engineering Brief once the Heliport Design Advisory Circular is updated. Lastly, this section requires that the FAA provide Airport District Offices with adequate guidance to support the development of vertiports, update relevant forms, and consider powered-lift operations in operational forecasts.

Sec. 656. Charting of Aviation Infrastructure.

This section instructs the FAA to continue to improve the accuracy of the Airport Master Record database and improve the process by which the operators of private and public aviation infrastructure can update database.

Sec. 657. Advanced Air Mobility Working Group.

This section extends the inter-departmental working group established through the *Advanced Air Mobility Coordination and Leadership Act* by six months and clarifies the intended scope of such working group to cover urban and regional air mobility.

This section also makes technical corrections, definitional edits, and expands the future uses of the working group if determined valuable by the Secretary.

Sec. 658. Advanced Air Mobility Infrastructure Pilot Program Extension.

This section amends the Advanced Air Mobility Infrastructure Pilot Program established in the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023* to conform definitions with Sec. 657 of this Act. This section also clarifies that the consideration of the use of existing infrastructure in concert with new infrastructure is eligible under the grant program.

Lastly, this section expands the information collected by the DOT Secretary under the pilot program and extends the program for two years, through 2026.

Subtitle C – Other Provisions

Sec. 681. Report on National Spaceports Policy.

This section extends the report established under section 580(c)(3) of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* until 2028.

Sec. 682. Intermodal Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Pilot Program.

This section establishes a \$20 million pilot grant program with a dollar-for-dollar match to support transportation projects at launch and reentry sites.

Sec. 683. Airspace Access for High-Speed Aircraft.

This section gives the FAA Administrator the authority to establish high speed testing corridors and to ensure there is a process in which manufacturers and operators of high-speed aircraft can engage in flight testing of such high-speed aircraft.

This section requires the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the appropriate agencies, to conduct a study to assess necessary actions to facilitate the integration and operation of high-speed aircraft into the national airspace system. In addition, this section requires the Administrator to study how high-speed aircraft may be able to conduct operations above the upper boundary of Class A airspace in a manner that limits aircraft noise levels at ground level. Not later than two years after the completion of the study, the FAA Administrator shall issue an NPRM in the Federal Register to permit flight operations with speeds above Mach 1 at or above the altitude identified in the study under this section.

Sec. 684. ICAO Activities on New Technologies.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to prioritize engagement with ICAO to improve aviation safety and support the entry-into-service of new forms of aviation.

This section further directs the FAA Administrator to contribute to or lead ICAO efforts with respect to the development of landing and take-off noise standards for supersonic aircraft.

Sec. 685. AIP Eligibility for Certain Spaceport Infrastructure.

This section allows for airports that are also spaceports to use AIP funds to repave the entire length and width of their runway if there is a commercial space transportation need for such size.

Sec. 686. Commercial Space Launch and Reentry Statistics.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to collect and disseminate information on commercial space launch and reentry operations.

Sec. 687. Report on Certain Infrastructure Needs.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to submit a report on the infrastructure needs at launch sites in rural communities to Congress.

Sec. 688. Airspace Integration for Space Launch and Reentry.

This section states that it is the sense of Congress that: (1) the safe and efficient use of the national airspace system is of the utmost importance; (2) commercial aviation and space launch and re-entry operations are vital to the United States global leadership, economy, and national security; (3) aircraft hazard areas are necessary during space launch (and re-entry) operations to ensure public safety; (4) the FAA Administrator should prioritize the development and deployment of technologies that improve the visibility of space launch operations and minimize the workload of air traffic controllers charged with routing air traffic during such operations.

This section authorizes \$10 million dollars for each of fiscal years 2024-2028 to expedite the development of technologies that would assist with achieving operational readiness no later than December 31, 2026.

Title VII: Passenger Experience Improvements

Subtitle A – General Provisions

Sec. 701. Advertisements and Solicitations for Passenger Air Transportation.

This section declares that it shall not be an unfair or deceptive practice for an air carrier, foreign air carrier, ticket agent, or other person offering to sell tickets for passenger air transportation or a tour, or tour component, to clearly and separately disclose government-imposed taxes and fees associated with the air transportation from the total cost of the air transportation when advertising or soliciting the base air fare. The section also clarifies that nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the DOT Secretary’s ability to regulate the disclosure of air carrier-imposed fees.

Section 702. Modernization of Consumer Complaint Submissions.

This section modernizes the air travel consumer complaint process within the DOT by requiring the DOT Secretary to maintain a website to accept such consumer complaint submissions. Furthermore, it requires air carriers to provide DOT consumer complaint submission information on their websites.

Sec. 703. Codification of Consumer Protection Provisions.

This section codifies sections 429 and 434 of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* into chapter 417 of title 49, United States Code, with regards to passenger rights and airline passengers with disabilities bill of rights.

Sec. 704. Extension of Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee.

This section extends the authorization of the Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee at the DOT and adds “ticket agents and travel management companies” to the Committee.

Sec. 705. Removal of Outdated References to Passengers with Disabilities.

This section removes outdated references to passengers with disabilities in title 49 of the United States Code.

Sec. 706. Extension of Aviation Consumer Advocate Reporting Requirement.

This section extends the requirement of the Aviation Consumer Advocate at the DOT to submit an annual report to Congress on complaints to, and recommendations of, the Aviation Consumer Advocate.

Sec. 707. Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee.

This section reauthorizes the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee and includes manufacturers of wheelchairs (including powered wheelchairs), and other mobility aids as a member of such Committee.

Sec. 708. Passenger Experience Advisory Committee.

This section establishes the Passenger Experience Advisory Committee within the DOT to advise the DOT Secretary and the FAA Administrator in carrying out activities relating to the improvement of the comprehensive passenger experience in air transportation customer service.

Sec. 709. Streamlining of Offline Ticket Disclosures.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to take such actions that may be necessary to update the process by which an air carrier or ticket agent is required to fulfill disclosure obligations in ticketing transactions for air transportation not completed through a website.

Sec. 710. Ticket Agent Refund Obligations.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to clarify that a ticket agent shall provide a refund to a passenger only if the ticket agent possesses or has access to the funds of such passenger.

Sec. 711. Updating Passenger Information Requirement Regulations.

This section tasks the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee at the FAA with reviewing regulations relating to passenger information requirements for scheduled air carriers and allows the Committee to make recommendations to update and improve such regulations. Furthermore, this section requires the FAA Administrator to issue a final rule six years following the date of enactment of this Act revising passenger information requirements for scheduled air carriers.

Sec. 712. Mobility Aids on Board Improve Lives and Empower All.

This section requires air carriers to publish on their website relevant dimensions and other characteristics of the cargo holds of all aircraft types operated by the air carrier, while also allowing air carriers to protect the confidentiality of any trade secret or proprietary information submitted.

This section also directs the DOT Secretary to require air carriers to provide a refund to individuals with disabilities who purchase a ticket to fly on a carrier but cannot travel because the wheelchair of the individual cannot physically be accommodated in the cargo hold of the aircraft and directs the DOT Secretary to annually evaluate data regarding the mishandling of wheelchairs on aircraft.

Additionally, this section requires the DOT Secretary to develop a strategic plan to test and evaluate wheelchairs in accordance with applicable FAA crashworthiness and safety performance standards. Furthermore, it requires the DOT Secretary to sponsor studies to assess the likely demand for air travel by individuals with disabilities if they could remain seated in personal wheelchairs during flight. Finally, if determined to be technically feasible, the DOT Secretary shall commence a study to assess the economic and financial feasibility of air carrier and foreign air carriers implementing seating arrangements that accommodate passengers with wheelchairs in the main cabin during flight.

Sec. 713. Prioritizing Accountability and Accessibility for Aviation Consumers.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to provide an annual report on the disability-related aviation consumer complaints filed with the DOT.

Sec. 714. Aircraft Accessibility.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to study and evaluate improvements to transport category aircraft accessibility and provide the results of the study and evaluation, along with recommendations to address the findings, to Congress.

Sec. 715. Accessibility of Websites, Software Applications, and Kiosks for Individuals with Disabilities.

This section requires the DOT Secretary, in consultation with the United States Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (also known as the Access Board), to prescribe regulations setting forth minimum standards to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to access kiosks, software applications, and websites in a manner that is equally as effective as individuals without disabilities.

Sec. 716. Review of Methods to Report Flight Delay and Cancellation Statistics.

This section requires the DOT Secretary, in consultation with the FAA Administrator, to conduct a review of the means of reporting flight delay and cancellation statistics to the Secretary. The DOT Secretary is required to coordinate and collaborate with air carriers when conducting such review.

Sec. 717. Reimbursement for Incurred Costs.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to direct airlines providing scheduled passenger service to establish policies regarding reimbursement for lodging, transportation between such lodging and the airport, and meal costs incurred due to a flight cancellation or significant delay directly attributable to the air carrier.

Sec. 718. Airline Operational Resiliency Plans.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to require a covered air carrier to develop and regularly update an operational resiliency strategy to prevent or limit the impact of future flight disruptions on passengers.

Sec. 719. Family Seating.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to issue an NPRM to establish a policy directing air carriers that assign seats, or allow individuals to select seats in advance of the date of departure of a flight, to sit each child who has not attained the age of 14 years, adjacent to an accompanying adult at no additional cost beyond the ticket price. This section also does not allow the DOT Secretary to impose a change in the overall seating or boarding policy of an air carrier that has an open or flexible seating policy in place that generally allows adjacent family seating.

Sec. 720. Seat Dimensions.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to initiate a rulemaking on minimum dimensions for passenger seat sizes. If the FAA Administrator determines a rulemaking is not necessary, they shall brief the appropriate committees of Congress on such decision.

Sec. 721. Improved Training Standards for Assisting Passengers who use Wheelchairs.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to issue an NPRM to develop minimum training standards for airline personnel and contractors who assist passengers with disabilities using wheelchairs with boarding or deplaning a commercial flight. Airline personnel required to complete the training must do so within 18 months and be recertified every 18 months. In addition, airline personnel must be able to demonstrate the following skills: safely using the aisle chair or other boarding devices, assist in transferring a passenger to and from their wheelchair, and the ability to effectively communicate and take instructions from the passenger.

This section also requires the DOT Secretary, in producing such a rule, to consider whether air carriers and foreign air carriers should partner with national disability organizations and/or disabled veterans' organizations. In addition, the DOT Secretary shall consider if such personnel should receive training from medical professionals on lifting disabled passengers.

Lastly, this section directs the DOT Secretary to issue a final rulemaking not later than 12 months after enactment and gives the DOT Secretary the ability to assess civil penalties in cases where air carriers and foreign air carriers fail to meet the requirements.

Sec. 722. Training Standards for Stowage of Wheelchairs and Scooters.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to issue an NPRM not later than six months after the date of enactment of this Act. The rulemaking shall develop minimum standards for the stowage of scooters and wheelchairs used by passengers with disabilities. The standards developed under this section shall apply to airline personnel and contractors who stow scooters and wheelchairs onboard a commercial flight.

Airline personnel and contractors who stow scooters and wheelchairs must complete training within 18 months and be recertified every 18 months. In addition to the training course, airline

personnel and contractors must demonstrate the ability to properly handle and configure wheelchairs and scooters on each aircraft type operated by the air carrier, properly review wheelchair or scooter information provided by the passenger or manufacturer, and properly load, secure, and unload wheelchairs and scooters (including how to use any specialized equipment).

This section also requires the DOT Secretary, in producing such a rule, to consider whether air carriers and foreign air carriers ought to partner with national disability organizations and/or disabled veterans' organizations, wheelchair manufacturers, and aircraft manufacturers in developing such training.

Lastly, this section directs the DOT Secretary to issue a final rulemaking not later than 12 months after enactment and gives the Secretary the ability to assess civil penalties in cases where air carriers and foreign air carriers fail to meet the requirements.

Sec. 723. Investigation of Complaints.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to investigate complaints of discrimination against individuals with disabilities within 120 days of receiving such complaint. In addition, the DOT Secretary shall provide (in writing) to the individual who filed the complaint, and the air carrier alleged to have made the discrimination, the facts underlying the complaint and any action the DOT Secretary is taking in response to the investigation.

Sec. 724. Standards.

This section requires the DOT Secretary, not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, to initiate a rulemaking process regarding standards to ensure the aircraft boarding and deplaning process is accessible, in terms of design for, transportation of, and communication with, individuals with disabilities and requires the DOT Secretary to issue a final rule regarding such standards. This also section requires the DOT Secretary to issue an NPRM, not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, on accessible in-flight entertainment.

Additionally, this section requires the DOT Secretary to conduct a negotiated rulemaking on newly type certificated aircraft standards for seating arrangements to accommodate individuals with disabilities using wheelchairs (among other provisions), contingent on if the feasibility study required by section 712(d)(3) of this Act finds economic and financial feasibility of air carriers and foreign air carriers implementing seating arrangements that accommodate individuals with disabilities using wheelchairs. Furthermore, after the completion of the negotiated rulemaking, this section requires the DOT Secretary to issue an NPRM followed by a final rule regarding such standards.

Finally, this section requires the Air Carrier Access Act Advisory Committee to examine technical solutions and the feasibility of visually and tactilely accessible announcements on-board aircraft. This section also requires the DOT Secretary to prescribe regulations setting forth minimum standards that ensure all gates (including counters), ticketing areas, and customer service desks covered under such section at airports are accessible to and usable by all individuals with disabilities.

Subtitle B – Air Traffic

Sec. 741. Transfers of Air Traffic Systems Acquired with AIP.

This section allows an airport in a non-contiguous state to transfer a Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights purchased with AIP funds to the FAA for operation.

Sec. 742. NextGen Programs.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to expedite the implementation of NextGen programs and capabilities. In doing so, the FAA Administrator is directed to prioritize performance-based navigation, data communications, terminal flight data management, and aeronautical information management systems, with specific implementation due dates.

Sec. 743. Airspace Access.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to conduct a comprehensive review of the national airspace system, including special use airspace, within three years of the Act's enactment. The FAA Administrator is also tasked with identifying methods to streamline and expedite access to certain categories of airspace for users who may not regularly have such access.

Sec. 744. Airspace Transition Completion.

This section requires the FAA to complete the transition of the Newark, New Jersey, radar sector.

Sec. 745. FAA Contract Towers.

This section requires that the FAA Administrator update its regulations, standards, and guidance on operational readiness inspections under the Contract Tower program to give airport sponsors seven years to complete these inspections if they are acting in good faith while attempting to complete these inspections.

This section also directs the FAA Administrator to authorize and enable the use of advanced technologies at Contract Towers, specifically with technology that is similar to that of FAA air traffic controllers.

This section directs the DOT Secretary to assess the existing liability limits for contract tower contractors to ultimately determine if currently established liability limits need updating.

Sec. 746. FAA Contract Tower Workforce Audit.

This section directs the DOT OIG to conduct an audit of the workforce needs for the FAA Contract Tower Program. The audit should review staffing levels, assess any potential need for an air traffic controller training program for contract tower controllers, and explore initial technical training for these controllers.

Sec. 747. Aviation Infrastructure Sustainment.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to develop performance metrics for the operations of safety-critical communication, navigation, and surveillance aviation infrastructure to determine when these types of infrastructure need to be taken out of service and replaced, as necessary.

Sec. 748. Air traffic Control Tower Safety.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to ensure that the safety of the national airspace system and its users are the primary consideration when making determinations about the design, adoption, and construction of air traffic control towers.

Sec. 749. Air Traffic Services Data Reports.

This section extends the air traffic services biennial data reporting requirement from 8 years to 14 years.

Sec. 750. Consideration of Small Hub Control Towers.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, when selecting projects for the replacement of Federally owned contract towers, to consider selecting projects at small hub commercial service airports with air traffic control towers that are at least 50 years old.

Sec. 751. Air Traffic Control Tower Replacement Process Report.

This section mandates that the FAA Administrator submit a report to Congress on the process by which ATC facilities are chosen for replacement. This section also mandates that the Administrator produce and publish on the website of the Administration a list of all air traffic control tower facilities replaced within the previous 10-year period, any facilities in the process of being replaced, and any facilities under consideration for replacement.

Sec. 752. FAA Contract Tower Pilot Program.

This section tasks the FAA Administrator with establishing a pilot program to convert three high activity contract towers (under the FAA Contract Tower Program) to visual flight rule towers staffed by the Administration. When selecting facilities to participate in the pilot program, the Administrator shall prioritize towers that have had over 200,000 tower operation in calendar year 2022 or a small hub airport with more than 900,000 passenger enplanements in calendar year 2021, have control towers owned by the Administration or towers constructed to Administration standards, and operate within complex air space.

This section also tasks the FAA Administrator with appointing all air traffic controllers employed as Federal contract tower operators to the position of air traffic controller so long as they meet the qualifications established in Code and meet all other pre-employment qualifications.

Subtitle C – Small Community Air Service

Sec. 771. Essential Air Service Reforms.

This section makes reforms to the Essential Air Service (EAS) program while ensuring the program remains committed to connecting communities. This section reduces the maximum overall per passenger subsidy cap of the program from \$1,000 to \$500, requires the DOT Secretary to consider the total cost of an air carrier’s application, and applies a 5 percent cost share to communities not in Alaska or Hawaii that are less than 175 miles from a large or medium hub airport beginning in fiscal year 2027.

Sec. 772. Essential Air Service Authorization.

This section authorizes, out of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, funding for the EAS program. This includes \$332 million for fiscal year 2024, \$312 million for fiscal year 2025, \$300 million for fiscal year 2026, \$265 million for fiscal year 2027 and \$252 million for fiscal year 2028.

Sec. 773. Small Community Air Service Development Program Reform and Authorization.

This section reduces the prohibition for use of a Small Community Air Service Development Program grants for the same project from ten years to six years. Furthermore, this section allows the DOT Secretary to give priority to communities who demonstrate support from at least one air carrier to provide service. Finally, this section authorizes the Small Community Air Service Development Program at \$10 million a year through fiscal year 2028.

Sec. 774. GAO study on Increased Costs of Essential Air Service.

This section directs the Comptroller General to study the causes of increased costs of the EAS program.

Title VIII: Miscellaneous

Sec. 801. Digitalization of FAA Processes.

This section requires that the FAA evaluate their programs, activities, and processes and work to digitize those that may be beneficial to external entities or internal coordination.

Sec. 802. FAA Telework.

This section puts in place requirements for FAA telework policies, requiring that telework policies be based on job functions, duties, and level of management to ensure the mission of the agency can be accomplished effectively. This section requires that telework policies cannot inhibit site visits, inspections, in-person collaboration, on-the-job training, and operations of the NAS. Lastly, this section requires the consideration of telework status and duty station when determining pay rates for employees.

Sec. 803. Review of Office Space.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to review the office footprint of the DOT to determine if it is an adequate use of resources based on the workforce, the needs of that workforce, the regions where DOT's modal administrations perform work, and general changes to how and where work is completed. This section then requires the DOT Secretary to determine where office consolidation (within a reasonable distance) within and between modes may make sense in order to more effectively utilize resources and provide amenities to personnel. This section also requires that such review consider accessibility for persons with disabilities, maintenance costs, and age and condition of such offices. This section does not include a review of operational facilities.

Sec. 804. Aircraft Weight Reduction Task Force.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to establish a task force to identify ways to safely reduce the weight of certain aircraft to reduce fuel burn. The task force will review and evaluate various factors, including: (1) regulations that may inhibit the certification of new materials, manufacturing processes, components, or technologies without decreasing safety; (2) outdated

and underused elements of aircraft; (3) novel technologies and manufacturing processes; and (4) non-proprietary methods that air carriers use to decrease weight.

Sec. 805. Audit of Technical Writing Resources and Capabilities.

This section directs the DOT Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to review the technical writing support, resources, and educational tools provided to FAA employees in order to effectively write regulations, orders, and other guidance materials, and to provide recommendations on such subject.

Sec. 806. FAA Participation in Industry Standards Organizations.

This section requires the FAA to actively participate in industry standard organizations (ISO) working on the development of aviation standards and means of compliance. This section requires that the FAA accept or decline an invitation to join a working group, subcommittee, or other body of an ISO and provide such response to the ISO and Congress. To the extent that the FAA does choose to participate, this section makes it clear that the FAA should be contributing to the development of work products and providing feedback and expertise as relevant, in addition to coordinating with and informing FAA management and other FAA subject matter experts about the status of ISO work products.

Sec. 807. Sense of Congress on Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards.

This section expresses the sense of Congress that the FAA should be following the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119, Federal Participation in the Development and Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards and Conformity Assessment Activities.

Sec. 808. Required Designation.

Ensures aviation rulemaking committees comprised of stakeholders can deliberate on recommendations to the FAA Administrator without undue scrutiny before publication.

Sec. 809. Sensitive Security Information.

This section would restore DOT authorities that were inadvertently repealed with the passage of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* (P.L. 115-254). This section allows the DOT Secretary to maintain DOT's Sensitive Security Information (SSI) regulations in Section 15.5 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations.

Section 810. Preserving Open Skies While Ensuring Fair Skies.

This section clarifies that the public interest test carried out by DOT considers the undermining of labor standards and applies it to the consideration of foreign carrier permits. This section also adds the undermining of labor standards as a consideration when formulating the negotiating policy of the United States.

Sec. 811. Commercial Preference.

This section amends the general procurement authority of the FAA to make clear they should be updating their acquisition management system periodically and should include in such updates the consideration for commercial products and services (which the FAA Administrator may already be doing in some instances).

Sec. 812. Consideration of Third-Party Services.

This section updates the requirement that FAA maintain plans and policies related to operation of the NAS (and execute on such plans) in a manner that covers current FAA practices, including the use of third-party services. This section also makes technical corrections in section 44501.

Sec. 813. Certificates of Authorization or Waiver.

This section provides discretion to the FAA Administrator to approve aircraft operations within Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs). This section also requires that, if the FAA Administrator approves operations within statutory TFRs, conditions of those approvals include discretion to permit flights within 0.75 nautical miles under certain conditions.

Sec. 814. Wing-In-Ground-Effect Craft.

This section requires the FAA Administrator and the Commandant of the Coast Guard to execute a memorandum of understanding (MOU) regarding the specific roles, responsibilities, and resources of the respective entities pertaining to wing-in-ground (WIG) effect craft. This section explicitly prohibits the DOT Secretary from regulating a WIG-effect craft operator as an air carrier.

Sec. 815. Quasiquicentennial of Aviation.

This section states that it is the sense of Congress that the DOT Secretary and the FAA Administrator shall facilitate and participate in local, national, and international observances to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Wright brothers first flight on December 17, 2028.

Sec. 816. Federal Contract Tower Wage Determinations and Positions.

This section requires that the DOT Secretary request that the Secretary of Labor review and update the cost-of-living adjustment for air traffic controllers at Federal contract towers and create a new wage determination for managers at Federal contract towers.

Sec. 817. Internal Process Improvements Review.

This section requires the DOT OIG review the process by which the FAA develops and coordinates orders, advisory circulars, statements of policy, guidance, technical standards, and other materials in order to reduce the timeline required to produce and update such materials.

Sec. 818. Acceptance of Digital Driver's License and Identification Cards.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to take such actions necessary to accept a digital or mobile driver's license issued by a state in such instances where an individual is required to submit a government-issued identification.

Sec. 819. Buckeye 940 Release of Deed Restrictions.

This section releases former Luke Air Force Base Auxiliary Field #6 from certain federal land use deed restrictions.

Sec. 820. Federal Aviation Administration Information Technology System Integrity.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to conduct a review of aging information technology systems within the FAA to identify, inventory, and assess critical software and hardware systems and their vulnerabilities to degradation, errors, and malicious attacks. In

conducting this review, the FAA Administrator is directed to identify the necessary upgrades and replacements needed to decrease the risks posed by such vulnerabilities and address each vulnerability appropriately.

This section also requires the DOT OIG to audit the integrity of information systems of the Administration.

Sec. 821. Briefing on Radio Communications Coverage Around Mountainous Terrain.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to brief Congress on the radio communications coverage of the airspace surrounding the Mena Intermountain Municipal Airport to determine at what altitudes radio communications capabilities may be compromised or lost, and to make recommendations on changes necessary to increase the radio communications coverage near this airport.

Sec. 822. Study on Congested Airspace.

This section directs the Comptroller General to initiate a study on the efficiency and efficacy of scheduled commercial air service transiting congested airspace. In conducting the study, the Comptroller General shall examine various regions of congested airspace, commercial air activity, military flight activity, emergency response activity, commercial launch and reentry activities, weather, and air traffic controller staffing.

Sec. 823. Administrative Services Franchise Fund.

This section addresses an inefficiency in the use of FAA's franchise fund which requires that all funds be paid in advance. The flexibility provided is consistent with funds of other Departments.

Sec. 824. Use of Biographical Assessments.

This section amends Section 44506(f)(2)(A) of title 49, United States Code, by striking "paragraph (1)(B)(ii)" and inserting "paragraph (1)(B)".

Sec. 825. Whistleblower Protection Enforcement.

This section clarifies that the FAA and the Department of Labor shall collectively determine an enforcement action against a person who retaliates against a whistleblower following an adjudication process and determination.

Sec. 826. Final Rulemaking on Certain Manufacturing Standards.

This section instructs the FAA to publish a final rule on aircraft standards that meets the minimum required for United States manufacturers to sell aircraft overseas.

Sec. 827. Remote Dispatch.

This section establishes a certificate for aircraft dispatchers and requires that air carriers maintain designated dispatch centers and flight following centers. This section also clarifies that air carriers may not dispatch aircraft from any location other than its designated dispatch centers, except in cases of emergency.

Sec. 828. Employee Assault Prevention and Response Plans Amendment.

This section amends section 551 of the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* to give the FAA Administrator authority to enforce the requirement that commercial airlines establish employee assault and response plans.

Sec. 829. Crew Member Self-Defense Training.

This section requires commercial airlines provide a process by which crew members can receive reasonable accommodations for self-defense training courses.

Sec. 830. Formal Sexual Assault and Harassment Policies on Air Carriers and Foreign Air Carriers.

This section directs passenger air carriers and foreign air carriers to issue a formal policy on sexual assault or harassment incidents. The policy mandated by this section should include a statement of zero tolerance, procedures for reporting a sexual assault or harassment incident, procedures for personnel to follow following the report of an incident, procedures to limit or prohibit future travel for any passenger who causes an incident, and training for appropriate personnel.

This section also directs air carriers and foreign air carriers to prominently display on their website (and appropriate signage) a written statement informing passengers and personnel of the procedure for reporting an incident.

Sec. 831. Interference With Security Screening Personnel.

This section clarifies that interference with security screening personnel extends to an airport or air carrier employee performing ticketing, check-in, baggage claim, or boarding functions.

Sec. 832. Mechanisms to Reduce Helicopter Noise.

This section instructs the Comptroller General to examine ways that state and local governments can mitigate commercial helicopter noise.

Sec. 833. Technical Corrections.

This section makes various non-substantive technical and conforming amendments.

Sec. 834. Transportation of Organs.

This section tasks the DOT Secretary, in coordination with the FAA Administrator, to convene a working group to assist in developing best practices and identifying hindrances for transporting an organ in the cabin of a commercial aircraft. The working group shall consist of air carriers operating under part 121, organ procurement organizations, organ transplant hospitals, flight attendants, and any other Federal agencies determined appropriate by the FAA Administrator. One year after convening, the working group will submit a report with recommendations to the Secretary.

Sec. 835. Report on Application Approval Timing.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to submit to Congress a report on the application process for Part 137 certificates.

Sec. 836. Study on Air Cargo Operations.

This section requires the Comptroller General to initiate a study on the economic sustainability of air cargo operations, including the airport facilities and infrastructure as well as intramodality of cargo operations at an airport that support such operations.

Sec. 837. Next Generation Radio Altimeters.

This section directs the FAA Administrator (in coordination with industry stakeholders) to carry out an accelerated program to assist with the development, testing, and certification of standards and technology necessary to ensure the FAA is able to certify, produce standards, and meet the goal of next generation radio altimeters equipped across all necessary aircraft by January 1, 2028. In addition, the FAA Administrator may award grants for the purpose of meeting the equipage goal of January 1, 2028.

Sec. 838. Sense of Congress Regarding Safety and Security of Aviation Infrastructure.

This section expresses the sense of Congress that the safety and security of aviation infrastructure is essential.

Sec. 839. Restricted Category Aircraft Maintenance and Operations.

This section clarifies that the FAA Administrator shall have sole jurisdiction over the maintenance and operations of civil restricted category aircraft. This section ensures that other Federal or local governmental bodies do not set maintenance or operational requirements for the safety of such aircraft.

Sec. 840. Report on Telework.

This section requires the DOT Secretary to provide Congress with a report detailing direct and indirect costs and inefficiencies associated with the maximum telework policies during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Sec. 841. Crewmember Pumping Guidance.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to issue guidance to part 121 air carriers relating to crewmembers pumping during noncritical phases of flight. In producing guidance, the FAA Administrator shall consider multiple methods of expressing breast milk that could be used by crewmembers and ensure that any guidance does not require an air carrier or foreign air carrier to incur significant expenses such as the addition of an extra crewmember or removal or retrofitting of any seats on the aircraft.

Sec. 842. Aircraft Interchange Agreement Limitations.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to conduct a study on the regulations and use of foreign interchange agreements.

Sec. 843. Federal Aviation Administration Academy and Facility Expansion Plan.

This section requires the FAA Administrator to develop a plan to expand the FAA's capacity for training air traffic controllers, including the establishment of a second FAA ATC training academy. This section requires the FAA Administrator to submit the plan to Congress and brief Congress on the plan developed under this section.

Title IX: National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2023

Sec. 901. Short Title.

This title may be cited as the “National Transportation Safety Board Amendments Act of 2023”.

Sec. 902. Authorization of Appropriations.

This section authorizes \$142 million for fiscal year 2024, \$145 million for fiscal year 2025, \$150 million for fiscal year 2026, \$155 million for fiscal year 2027, and \$161 million for fiscal year 2028 for the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB or “Board” in this title).

Sec. 903. Clarification of Treatment of Territories.

This section clarifies that the term “State” means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

Sec. 904. Additional Workforce Training.

This section authorizes the NTSB to acquire training on emerging transportation technologies and allows the NTSB to conduct training to meet the needs of the NTSB’s strategic workforce plan.

Sec. 905. Acquiring Mission-Essential Knowledge and Skills.

This section gives the Chairman of the Board direct hiring authority of highly qualified personnel with specialized knowledge if the Chairman determines there is a severe shortage of qualified personnel or a critical hiring need for particular positions. This direct hire authority terminates on the date that is five years after the date of enactment of this Act and does not apply to positions in the excepted service or the Senior Executive Service.

Sec. 906. Overtime Annual Report Termination.

This section repeals the statutory requirement that the NTSB submit an Overtime Pay annual report to Congress.

Sec. 907. Strategic Workforce Plan.

This section directs the Board to submit to Congress a strategic workforce plan that covers a five-year forecast period. The workforce plan should be updated at least once every five years and should be made available to the public on the Board’s website.

Sec. 908. Travel Budgets.

This section directs the Board to establish annual fiscal year budgets for non-accident-related travel expenditures. These new estimates are to be included in the annual budget request of the Board. In addition, the Board shall notify Congress if any member exceeds their non-accident-related travel budget.

Sec. 909. Retention of Records.

This section grants the Board the ability to retain investigative records for such periods as determined by the Board.

Sec. 910. Nondisclosure of Interview Recordings.

This section prohibits the Board from publicly disclosing any audio or video recordings of interviews with participants in, or witnesses to, an accident being investigated by the Board. This does not pertain to transcripts or summaries of such interviews. In addition, the Board must notify Congress if the Board or United States Attorney General carries out civil actions against an airman employed by an air carrier operating under part 121 at the time of the accident.

Sec. 911. Closed Unacceptable Recommendations.

This section requires the NTSB to include in their annual report to Congress a list of each recommendation made by the Board to the DOT Secretary or the Commandant of the Coast Guard that was closed in an unacceptable status in the past 12 months.

Sec. 912. Establishment of Office of Oversight, Accountability, and Quality Assurance.

This section establishes an Office of Oversight, Accountability, and Quality Assurance at the NTSB to promote efficiency and effectiveness; and prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse in programs and operations at the NTSB. Furthermore, it requires the Director of the newly established office to submit an annual report to Congress on the activities, investigations, findings, and recommendations of the Office.

Sec. 913. Miscellaneous Investigative Authorities.

This section grants the NTSB additional authority to investigate and identify probable cause for any highway accident, including highway accidents that occur at railroad grade crossings, concurrent with any State investigation. In addition, this section clarifies the NTSB's investigative authority into railroad accidents by including railroad grade crossing or trespasser accidents in which there is a fatality or substantial property damage.

Sec. 914. Public Availability of Accident Reports.

This section directs the Board to make accident reports available to the public, at no cost, via a database on their website. In addition to being made available on their website, the reports should be available to the public in printed form at a reasonable cost.

Sec. 915. Ensuring Accountability for Timeliness of Reports.

This section directs the Board to submit a report to Congress on any accident report not completed within two years of the accident. The report to Congress shall contain the reasons why the investigation has yet to be completed. The Board will also be required to submit subsequent progress reports to Congress every 90 days until the investigation is complete.

Sec. 916. Ensuring Access to Data.

This section ensures that the Board will be able to obtain recordings, recording information, and data pertinent to accidents from manufacturers or vendor suppliers. This will enable the Board to read and interpret any recording device or recorded information pertinent to an accident and allow the Board to perform an independent physics-based simulation and analysis of an accident.

Sec. 917. Public Availability of Safety Recommendations.

This section directs the Board to make the DOT Secretary's responses to safety recommendations available to the public, at no cost, via a database on their website. In addition to being made available on their website, the responses should be available to the public in printed form at a reasonable cost.

Sec. 918. Improving Delivery of Family Assistance.

This section broadens the scope of family assistance to include passengers and the families of those passengers involved in accidents within United States airspace or airspace delegated to the United States. This section also directs the Director of Family Support Services to request a passenger list from the air carrier as soon as practicable. The Director may not release any individual's information unless they deem it appropriate to provide such information to the family of the passenger or a local, state, or Federal agency tasked with determining the whereabouts or welfare of the passenger. In addition, the independent non-profit organization designated for family assistance may request a passenger list to share with family, as appropriate. The designated organization may not publicly release the personal information of a passenger. Lastly, this section makes similar conforming edits to the scope of family assistance for passengers and the families of such passengers involved in rail accidents.

Sec. 919. Updating Civil Penalty Authority.

This section broadens the scope of civil penalties beyond aviation accidents, to include rail passenger accidents.

Sec. 920. Electronic Availability of Public Docket Records.

This section directs the Board to make all records included in the public docket of an accident or incident investigation electronically available to the public, regardless of the date on which such public docket or record was created. The Board shall provide an annual briefing to Congress until such records are electronically available to the public.

Sec. 921. Drug-Free Workplace.

This section directs the Board to implement a drug testing program for Board employees, in accordance with Executive Order 12564.

Sec. 922. Accessibility in the Workplace.

This section directs the NTSB to assess their offices (headquarters and regional offices) to identify barriers to accessibility to their facilities. The assessment shall be done in compliance with the *Architectural Barriers Act of 1968* and the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*.

Sec. 923. Most Wanted List.

As requested by the NTSB, this section directs the Board to terminate publication of the Most Wanted List.

Sec. 924. Technical Corrections.

This section makes technical corrections to sections relating to the NTSB in title 49, United States Code.

Title X: Freedom to Fly Act of 2023.

Sec. 1001. Short Title.

This title may be cited as the “Freedom to Fly Act of 2023.”

Sec. 1002. Prohibition on Implementation of Vaccination Mandate.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating COVID-19 vaccine requirements for the personnel of air carriers.

Sec. 1003. Prohibition on Vaccination Requirements for FAA Contractors.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating COVID-19 vaccine requirements for the personnel of FAA contractors.

Sec. 1004. Prohibition on Vaccine Mandate for FAA Employees.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from putting in place COVID-19 vaccine requirements for employees of the FAA.

Sec. 1005. Prohibition on Vaccine Mandate for Passengers of Air Carriers.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating COVID-19 vaccine requirements for passengers on air carriers.

Sec. 1006. Prohibition on Implementation of a Mask Mandate.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating any mask requirements for the personnel of air carriers.

Sec. 1007. Prohibition on Mask Mandates for FAA Contractors.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating any mask requirements for the personnel of FAA contractors.

Sec. 1008. Prohibition on Mask Mandates for FAA Employees.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from putting in place any mask requirements for the personnel of the FAA.

Sec. 1009. Prohibition on Mask Mandate for Passengers of Air Carriers.

This section bars the FAA Administrator from mandating any mask requirements for passengers on air carriers.

Sec. 1010. Definitions.

This section contains definitions specific to Title X.

Title XI: FAA Research and Development

Sec. 1101. Short Title.

This title may be cited as the “FAA Research and Development Act of 2023.”

Sec. 1102. Definitions.

This section provides the meaning of terms used throughout the legislative text.

Subtitle A – Authorization of Appropriations

Sec. 1111. Authorization of Appropriations.

This section lists the funds authorized to be appropriated to the FAA to carry out research and development activities for fiscal years 2024-2028.

Subtitle B – FAA Research and Development Organization

Sec. 1121. Report on Implementation; Funding for Safety Research and Development.

This section directs the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to Congress to determine whether at least 70 percent of appropriated amounts supports safety research and development projects.

Subtitle C – FAA Research and Development Activities

Sec. 1131. Aviation Fuel Research, Development, and Usage.

This section authorizes the FAA Administrator, in coordination with other federal agencies and the private sector, to create a roadmap on research and development related to safe, lead-free fuel. This roadmap must identify activities to accelerate the development, testing and certification of such fuel for general aviation aircraft, and consider feasibility of widespread use of lead-free fuel by 2028.

Sec. 1132. Continuous Lower Energy, Emission, and Noise (CLEEN)

This section authorizes the FAA Administrator to expand the Continuous, Lower Energy, Emission, and Noise (CLEEN) program and broaden eligibility to allow new entrants to the aviation system.

Sec. 1133. Strategy on Hydrogen Aviation Research and Development.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to develop a research and development strategy on the safe use of hydrogen fuel as part of a sustainable future for aviation. This strategy will consider the feasibility, opportunities, and challenges associated with use of hydrogen in aviation. It also assesses the use of hydrogen in addition to other alternative approaches to traditional aviation fuel.

Sec. 1134. Report on Future Electric Grid Resiliency.

This section directs the Administrator, in coordination with the Secretary of Energy, to submit a report to Congress on the potential impacts on the electrical grid of increased use of advanced air mobility (AAM) vehicles and the potential impacts on clean energy generation from these activities.

Sec. 1135. Air Traffic Surveillance Over Oceans and Other Remote Locations.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in consultation with the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), to research civilian air traffic

surveillance over the oceans and establish a pilot program to test and evaluate air traffic surveillance and tracking equipment over the U.S.-controlled oceanic airspace and other remote locations. The section also directs FAA to transmit a report to Congress on the activities conducted under this section.

Sec. 1136. Utilization of Space-Based Assets to Improve Air Traffic Control and Aviation Safety.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in coordination with the Administrator of NASA, to carry out a program for research and development of air traffic control and aviation safety technologies utilizing space-based platforms and space-based automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast data. This program shall focus on monitoring and reporting air turbulence events, space-based multilaterate surveillance, and identifying global positioning system and global navigation satellite system interference on air traffic services.

Sec. 1137. Aviation Weather Technology Review.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in consultation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator, to conduct a review of current and planned technologies that can more accurately detect and predict weather impacts to aviation, inform how advanced predictive models can enhance aviation operations, and increase national airspace system safety and efficiency.

Sec. 1138. Air Traffic Surface Operations Safety.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to research technologies and operations that enhance air traffic surface operations safety, identify ground-hazards, reduce near-misses at airports, and enhance situational awareness of pilots and controllers, and to also consider data from diverse advanced air mobility operations to inform current safety programs.

Sec. 1139. Airport and Airfield Pavement Technology Research Program.

This section authorizes the FAA Administrator to continue the competitive grant program to support Airfield Payment Technology Program, which deploys innovative technologies for airfield pavements, taxiways, and aprons for safer, more cost-effective, and more durable airfield pavements.

Sec. 1140. Technology Review of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Technologies.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to conduct a review of current and planned artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies that may be used to improve airport safety and efficiency, and report to Congress on the results.

Sec. 1141. Research Plan for Commercial Supersonic Research.

This section directs the FAA Administrator, in consultation with the Administrator of NASA and industry, to identify additional research needed to support establishment of Federal and international policies, regulations, standards, and recommended practices relating to the certification and operation of civil supersonic aircraft.

Sec. 1142. Electromagnetic Spectrum Research and Development.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to conduct research and development related to the use and management of radio frequency spectrum in the civil aviation domain, including for aircraft, unmanned aircraft system, and advanced air mobility. The research will include impact to civil aviation safety when reallocating radio frequency spectrum adjacent to spectrum allocated for aviation communication, navigation, and surveillance, along with mitigation and implication of new emerging technologies on spectrum interference.

Sec. 1143. Aviation Structures, Materials, and Advanced Manufacturing Research and Development.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to carry out a program for research and development of advanced additive manufacturing to assess safety of processes, aviation structures, and materials for use in and on aircraft in partnership with commercial entities. This section also directs FAA to report on the findings of this research to Congress.

Sec. 1144. Research Plan on the Remote Tower Program.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to submit a plan for additional research and development needed to mature remote tower technology and to provide a strategic roadmap for research needed to inform operational certification of remote towers in the National Airspace System (NAS).

Sec. 1145. Air Traffic Control Training.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to carry out a research program on the use of advanced technologies to reduce Certified Professional Controller training time to certification while maintaining or improving current levels of safety to enable increased staffing and pipeline of air traffic control workforce.

Sec. 1146. Report on Aviation Cybersecurity Directives.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to provide a report to Congress on the status of the FAA's implementation of the directive outlined in section 2111 of the *FAA Extension, Safety, and Security Act*. The report should include an assessment of FAA's progress in developing and implementing strategic cybersecurity framework, and a description of prioritized research and development activities for the most needed improvements to safeguard the NAS.

Sec. 1147. Rule of Construction Regarding Collaborations.

This section clarifies that the legislation does not modify or restrict collaborations between the Administrator, stakeholders, and labor organizations related to FAA research, development, demonstration, and testing activities.

Sec. 1148. Turbulence Research and Development.

This section directs the FAA Administrator in coordination with the Administrator of NASA and the Administrator of NOAA to conduct applied research and development on turbulence and its impact on aviation. The section also directs the Administrator to avoid duplication with existing research and development activities across the federal government and authorizes the purchase of data from commercial providers.

Sec. 1149. Research, Development and Demonstration Programs.

This section directs the FAA Administrator to carry out research, development, testing, evaluation, and demonstration of low-carbon fuels. This work is to be carried out in collaboration with federal agencies, industry stakeholders, research institutions, and other partners.

Sec. 1150. Limitation.

This section states that none of the funds made available under this act may be used for collaboration with the Chinese Community Party or any other Chinese-owned entity unless otherwise authorized by law after the date of enactment of the bill.

Title XII: Aviation Revenue Provisions

Sec. 1201. Airport and Airway Trust Fund Expenditure Authority.

This section extends general expenditure authority for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2028.

Sec. 1202. Extension of Taxes Funding Airport and Airway Trust Fund.

This section extends aviation taxes funding the Airport and Airway Trust Fund from October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2028, including taxes on fuel, the transportation of people, and the transportation of property.

Sec. 1203. Designation of Certain Airports as Ports of Entry.

This section designates primary or commercial service airports as ports of entry if they are within 30 miles from the international land border of the United States, are contractually associated with a land border crossing within 30 miles from the airport, and through this association, meet the numerical criteria considered by U.S. Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) for establishing a port of entry while terminating the application of the user fee requirement for such airports.