



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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May 2, 2024

Dear Senator,

As the executive officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), a labor union representing upwards of 90,000 professional employees, including tens of thousands of members working in aircraft manufacturing and aerospace research and development, we urge you to vote for the conferenced FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024, H.R. 3935. This bill is a commendable bipartisan achievement for the aircraft manufacturing workforce, aviation workers, the flying public, and the industry. The five-year reauthorization will invest in our world-leading aviation and aerospace industry, grow the skilled aviation workforce needed for 21st-century innovation, and strengthen our aviation system's commitment to safety. As we ask for your support, we are requesting all Members of Congress show their commitment to passing this bill so that it may be enacted before the May 10th FAA reauthorization deadline.

IFPTE is especially pleased to see the Aviation Workforce Development Programs expanded to include a new aviation manufacturing technical workforce development grant program and increased funding throughout the grant programs. For our members who work in aircraft manufacturing – building our nation's leading high-value export products – this commitment ensures that workforce development provides opportunities for the next generation of American aircraft manufacturing workers. Our union is engaged in workforce development for STEM fields and notably, the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, has launched the SPEEA Aerospace Career Enhancement (ACE) program to connect students and early and mid-career professionals to workforce training and education that supports the aerospace supply chain. We thank the Senate Commerce Committee and Aviation Safety, Operations, and Innovation Subcommittee Senators and staff for considering our members' perspectives and for their thoughtful approach to investing in the aircraft manufacturing workforce.

We are also pleased to see a consistent commitment throughout this legislation to aviation workers and aviation safety. Title III of this bill focuses on improving communication and training across the FAA's Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) program and provides resources to improve the FAA's aircraft certification process and safety management system. This bill maintains current pilot qualification standards, commits to hiring more Air Traffic Controllers (ATC) and the adoption of an ATC collaborative staffing model, and studies for revising the staffing model for FAA aviation safety personnel. Significant aviation worker safety provisions, including a focus on safety for airport ramp workers, cabin air safety, and updated fire and rescue staffing levels, are also included in the bill.

IFPTE appreciates the advancements this bill makes for equity, inclusivity, and accessibility in air travel. The inclusion of the Mobility Aids On Board Improve Lives and Empower All (MOBILE) Act will provide a strategic roadmap for implementing solutions to accommodate passengers with mobility aids. Funding for the Essential Air Service and the Small Community Air Service Development Grant are increased to allow for the modernization of airports serving small and rural communities. The bill also includes several provisions on improving aircraft accessibility, including a study on improving accessibility on newly certified aircraft.

Finally, we applaud Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Chairwoman Cantwell and Ranking Member Cruz as well as Aviation Safety, Operations, and Innovation Subcommittee Chairwoman Duckworth and Ranking Member Moran for finding a common purpose and bringing together diverse views across the Senate and the House. The resulting FAA Reauthorization Act is a commitment to public safety, accountability, innovation, and the aviation workers who are the key to the success of this industry.

Thank you for considering our request to vote for the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 so that it can be enacted before May 10th. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact IFPTE Legislative Director Faraz Khan at fkhan@ifpte.org.

Sincerely,



Matthew S. Biggs
IFPTE President



Gay Henson
IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer