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| |  | | --- | | **Senate Reauthorization Significantly Boosts Workforce Development**    Last week’s passage of Senate FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023 by the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is great news since it includes several workforce initiatives universally supported by the industry.    Important issues such as diversity, training and mental health were all included.    The Senate Reauthorization included:    ·     Establishes a new Women in Aviation in Aviation Advisory Committee at DOT to encourage more women to enter the aviation/aerospace workforce. A permanent advisory committee was the top recommendation of the Congressionally mandated Women in Aviation Advisory Board.    ·     Establishes the Aviation Medical Innovation and Modernization Working Group to address pilot mental health.  ·     Improves FAA’s ability to issue special medical approvals to address backlogs and get healthy pilots back to work.    ·     Requires FAA to develop a national plan to address critical workforce shortages.  ·     Includes the Thune-Sinema Amendment calling for increased use of simulators in pilot training was also included in the bill. Senators John Thune (R-SD) and Kirsten Sinema (R-AZ) offered the amendment saying the 1500-hour rule must evolve. The amendment was supported by industry as well as eight former FAA Administrators and two former presidents of the Airline Pilots Association (ALPA) who highlighted how the adoption of tested and trusted new technologies will strengthen safety. It allows the FAA to investigate and approve ways to make pilot training more diverse, practical, and robust, such as crediting the use of tested and proven advanced simulator training as part of a comprehensive pilot training regime.  ·     Boosts student loan limits to help fund flight training by incorporating the Flight Education Access Act, increasing the maximum borrowing limits for federal direct student loans to offset training at accredited flight schools required to obtain a commercial pilot license.    ·     Streamlines the transition for military servicemembers to civil aviation maintenance careers and increases FAA’s outreach on pathways to attain civilian mechanic certifications. The aviation industry captures less than 10% of military aviation maintenance technicians.  ·     Establishes a competitive grant program at DOT to enable eligible flight training schools to recruit and train veterans, who are not already military aviators, to become commercial pilots and certified flight instructors. By covering costs beyond existing veteran education benefits, the measure will help grow the supply of qualified pilots to provide air service to rural communities.    ·     Expands and increases funding for the FAA’s Aviation Workforce Development Grant Program to grow the aviation workforce pipeline and support the education and recruitment of pilots, maintenance technicians and aircraft manufacturing technical workers.    ·     To address the 3,000 short fall in air traffic controllers, the bill requires the FAA to revise and implement improved staffing standards based on models developed with the labor workforce to close ongoing staffing gaps.  ·     Provides for a new FAA training academy and reduces the training backlog for FAA and Federal Contract Tower Program controllers. [Read more](https://lnkd.in/gvihHeUu).  **Rally for Air Services urges members to reach out to their senators to thank them for their support of these important workforce initiatives.**  [RAA Applauds Senate Commerce Committee Passage of FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023](https://www.raa.org/raa-applauds-senate-commerce-committee-passage-of-faa-reauthorization-act-of-2023/)  [US Senate Panel Votes to Boost FAA Staffing, Rejects Hiking Pilot Retirement Age](https://www.usnews.com/news/top-news/articles/2024-02-08/us-senate-panel-votes-to-reject-hiking-pilot-retirement-age-to-67)  [FAA announces new enhanced collegiate controller training program](https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2024/02/faa-announces-new-enhanced-collegiate-controller-training-program-00140679?source=email) | |

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| |  | | --- | | **Congratulations Castle Aviation on Your 40th Anniversary**  **Reliable Robotics Earns Military Airworthiness for Remote Pilot Flight Tests**  Reliable Robotics received military airworthiness approval to begin flight testing and operational missions of its remotely piloted Cessna 208 Caravan for the U.S. Air Force. This approval signifies a deeper level of engagement with the Department of Defense (DoD) by enabling Reliable to demonstrate dual-use automated flight capabilities for military use cases, including cargo missions. [Read more](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240130939225/en).  **﻿Mountain Air Cargo, WAS to Sponsor Saab Operator Conference**    Mountain Air Cargo and subsidiary Worldwide Aircraft Services took a Platinum Sponsorship for the 2024 Saab Global Operators Conference, a two-day event for Saab 340 and 2000 operators, vendors and lessors. The conference is designed for the further development of the two aircraft types. [Read more](https://mtaircargo.com/saab-global-operators-conference/).  **ZeroAvia Shows Positive Results for On-Power Inverter Tech**  ZeroAvia successfully completed initial testing on its 200kW continuous power inverter design which operated at 230kW from 800 volts of direct current (Vdc). Calling it a large step change for the industry, the company said its inverter technology converts DC power from electric power sources into AC power, controlling the flow to electric motors. ZeroAvia will use the inverter tech on its 500KW ZA600 powerplant powering nine to 19-seat aircraft. [Read more](https://www.avweb.com/aviation-news/zeroavia-announces-positive-test-results-on-power-inverter-tech/).  In other news, the company is collaborating with ScottishPower to develop low carbon hydrogen supply to key airport locations. As well as exploring airport hydrogen supply models and financing, the companies will also explore clean power requirements and hydrogen production infrastructure for potential future ZeroAvia sites within ScottishPower’s distribution network. ZeroAvia recently announced a 70-engine agreement with Scottish headquartered Ecojet, backed by the prominent environmentalist and entrepreneur Dale Vince. [Read more](https://www.blueskynews.aero/issue-730/ZeroAvia-and-ScottishPower-to-develop-airport-hydrogen-supply-supporting-zero-emission-flights.html).  Further, MEHAIR placed a conditional order for up to 20 ZA600 hydrogen-electric engines. The regional operator’s order adds to the over 2,000 engine pre-orders secured by ZeroAvia. [Read more](https://zeroavia.com/mehair-places-order-for-20-zeroavia-za600-hydrogen-electric-engines/).  **McFarland Completes New Planning System**  Over the past 12 months, McFarland worked diligently towards migrating from its 30-year-old legacy software to Infor-Syteline Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP - Cloud based). This transition represents a substantial upgrade, enabling the elevation of the level of service it provides to both valued customers and suppliers. FMI [sales@mcfarlaneaviation.com](mailto:sales@mcfarlaneaviation.com), [purchasingteam@mcfarlaneaviation.com](mailto:purchasingteam@mcfarlaneaviation.com).  **ATR Receives De-Carbonization Approval**  ATR received the approval of its near-term emissions reduction targets by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). This independent assessment is a key achievement for ATR, after undergoing a robust evaluation of its entire set of emissions to define science-based reduction targets.  ATR is committed to achieving by 2030 a 50.4% reduction of absolute greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to operational processes and energy consumption (Scope 1 and Scope 2), in line with the 1.5°C trajectory outlined in the Paris Agreements. Within the same timeframe, the manufacturer is committed to reducing by 30% the absolute GHG emissions generated by its in-service aircraft fleet (Scope 3 - use of sold products). The baseline for both targets is 2018. [Read more](https://www.atr-aircraft.com/presspost/science-based-targets-initiative-sbti-approves-atrs-decarbonisation-targets/). | |

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Coppola, in describing the reason behind the initiative. “The key to solving the workforce problem is a process for focusing resources on the programs that are successfully addressing the workforce issue.”    Proposed Legislation: The Aerospace Workforce Development Program has two parts. (1) Modification of Department of Defense aerospace contracts to include aerospace education programs as subcontractors; and (2) Establish an Aerospace Education Program List on the DoD website where companies will find education programs to partner with and invest in as subcontractors. The list will rank aerospace education programs based on their contribution to the workforce.    The legislation grew out of the Congressionally mandated Youth Access to Aviation Jobs in America Task Force. To be eligible for education subcontracts, aerospace education organizations must show that they are effective in addressing workforce shortages in pilot, aircraft maintenance, aerospace engineering, manufacturing and other technically related fields.    AEPA is asking Aviation, Aerospace and Defense companies and organizations to join more than 20 organizations and businesses to have already [signed on to a letter supporting this program](https://forms.gle/Ag5rJW4e5LNPTeRy7).  [**To view the letter click here**](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fFqMBIN91GyBlE3_gMMvFu-diU_G9Xec/view?usp=sharing).  **To support the introduction of this legislation:**Click the link to the Google form to add your organization’s name to the letter. <https://forms.gle/Ag5rJW4e5LNPTeRy7>  **Breaking Down Barriers Improves Accessibility for Aviation Careers**    Huge Kudos to former American Airlines CEO Doug Parker for his Breaking Down Barriers Initiative, a new pilot development program with a neat twist. It partners with local non-profits in the Black community to develop the program designed to identify individuals who have the high potential to succeed as an aviator but who don't know the opportunity exists. He started with pilots because of the high earning potential which will make a large community impact.    This Aviation Week Network Window Seat Podcast with [Lee Ann Shay](https://www.linkedin.com/feed/) addresses the reactions of many pilots who criticize diversity initiatives and mislead the public, suggesting standards are changing to accommodate lesser performing pilots.    Parker says Breaking Down Barriers is about recognizing airline, aviation and aerospace careers are not accessible for everyone. He also says we will never achieve the hiring the best of the best if we do not open these opportunities to everyone.    "Unlike a college education there is no assistance available to become a pilot which can cost up to $100,000," he said. "What happens to people who can’t afford that or do not have any idea they can possibly be able to access this opportunity. They don’t consider it. That’s a financial barrier. So, those with the high potential to actually do this, don’t get to compete in the pool so we don’t have the best of the best. I don’t think that’s right. All of us want to ensure we get the very best so we must work to tear barriers down."    To start, Breaking Down Barriers will go into communities and identify 10 high-performing individuals who would never otherwise consider an aviation career and, who, once trained, will be flying as a commercial pilot for airlines within two to three years. BDB "provides the funding needed to individuals that have the capabilities, the intellect the desires to become a pilot, give them financial resources, the support they need along the way and the awareness they can do this."    Creating a virtuous cycle sets this program apart. In return that first class will mentor the next and so on but, most importantly, go back into their communities so others will see people who look like them who are pilots.    "That will make an enormous difference,” said Parker. “Not just for individuals who go through this program but the communities in which they live. This will make a huge impact not just on this profession or these people but for others in the community to see other opportunities like this exist. I think that is how you change the communities; seeing individuals in the community with the ability to achieve the full potential that exists within them. Given the opportunity they’ll show that potential and achieve it. We know it can be done and we're going to prove it."  **New Technicians Lack Trouble Shooting Skills**  Aircraft Electronics Association Director of Workforce Development Nick Brown noted new aircraft technicians often lack troubleshooting skills likely because we live in a throw-away society where repair often takes a back seat. Describing the skill, which includes not only a fix but understanding what went wrong, as indispensable, Brown said. He noted troubleshoot skills can be taught and are necessary with the pace of technology change. This column describes how teaching troubleshooting starts with understanding the basics. [Read more](https://www.aviationpros.com/education-training/avionics-training/article/53080091/how-to-teach-troubleshooting-without-the-trouble?o_eid=9442E9940323F4D&oly_enc_id=9442E9940323F4D&rdx.ident%5bpull%5d=omeda%7C9442E9940323F4D&utm_campaign=AVVDB240131020&utm_medium=email&utm_source=AMT+Daily).  [**Check out the crew hiring with FAPA's February Hiring Bulletin**](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/1/?ui=2&ik=46c8c36b32&view=lg&permmsgid=msg-f:1790166048408273663&ser=1) | |

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Beyond being pilotless, the aircraft includes cargo loading and unloading and a autonomous load balancing system enabling it to find optimal positioning for cargo in the internal cargo bay without any human intervention. [Read more](https://www.aerotime.aero/articles/mightyfly-unveils-new-autonomous-hybrid-evtol-cargo-aircraft).  **Electric, Uncrewed Aviation Industry Shakeout Expected This Year**  This year marks 20 years since the advent of sustainable aircraft development without much to show for it, concludes Leeham New & Analysis (LNA) pointing to the two-seat Pipistrel Velis Electro as the only production aircraft. LNA thinks 2024 will also see industry shakeout for Uncrewed Aerial Vehicle concepts owing to high cash burn and the need for far more investment for production development and achieving high production rates.  “LNA remains skeptical of eco-aviation progress. The new propulsion ideas have come to almost nothing, and we are now 10 years past when the intense search for alternatives started,” it said. “SAF is the most realistic solution for the 25,000 airliners that fly daily, but it will increase fuel prices beyond any fuel crisis we have experienced. [Read more](https://leehamnews.com/2024/01/18/outlook-2024-milestone-year-for-alternative-energy-development/).  **NASA Tests Autonomous Flight Software**  Using Sikorsky helicopters as air taxi stand ins, NASA test flew the aircraft over Long Island Sound and Connecticut to simulate the ability of future autonomous air taxis to avoid other aircraft. The helicopters were autonomous, guided by NASA-designed software while the aircraft surrounding them were virtual, part of a simulation to test pilotless flight systems. It was a first for testing NASA-designed collision avoidance software as part of an inter-agency test with Sikosky and DARPA. [Read more](https://www.helihub.com/2024/01/29/nasa-autonomous-flight-software-successfully-used-in-air-taxi-stand-ins/).    **Eve Air Names Four New Partners**    As part of its eVTOL master plan, Eve Air named Thales, Honeywell, RECARO Aircraft Seating and FACC to its supplier base with Honeywell supplying guidance and navigation products and external lighting. Thales will supply air data solutions for sensors and computers to aggregate airspeed, altitude and environmental conditions to aid pilots and onboard systems. FACC will develop and produce the aircraft’s horizontal and vertical tail, its rudder, elevator and aircraft ailerons. [Read more](https://www.aerotime.aero/articles/eve-air-mobility-evtol-embraer-honeywell-thales).    **Safran, Turbotech Test Hydrogen T-Prop**    Safran and Turbotech tested a hydrogen-powered turboprop for the light aircraft sector January 11 by testing the Turbotech TP-R90 model engine. The company suggested this is the first test, part of the BeautHyFuel project, to use hydrogen in a turboprop-style combustion engine designed for light aircraft. [Read more](https://www.airport-technology.com/news/turbotech-and-safran-test-hydrogen-turboprop/?cf-view).    **Phase I of Archer Flight Test Program Complete**    Archer’s Midnight aircraft hit another key milestone with completion of Phase 1 of its flight test program. Using lessons from previous four years of flight testing, the aircraft finished the flight test phase in approximately three months, significantly faster than Archer’s full-scale prototype aircraft - Maker. Additionally, Midnight’s battery system was recently upgraded to include some of the first high voltage battery packs off of Archer’s manufacturing line, a significant step as the company pushes towards being production ready. Having achieved these milestones, Midnight is on track to complete its first full wing-borne transition flight and begin piloted “for credit” testing with the FAA later this year. [Read more](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240131746740/en).    [Archer Continues Attracting Top Talent From Across Aviation Industry; Hires Two Leaders From Wheels Up and Delta Air Lines to Support Its Entry Into Service in 2025](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240119858136/en)    In other news, Archer signed a Space Act Agreement with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to kick off with an initial project focused on studying high-performance battery cells and safety testing targeted for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and space applications.  As part of the joint efforts around battery characterization, NASA and Archer will focus on further testing the safety, energy and power performance capabilities of the battery cells. [Read more](https://www.archer.com/news/archer-aviation-and-nasa-sign-space-act-agreement-to-collaborate-on-mission-critical-evtol-aircraft-technologies).  **Joby, Atlantic Aviation Collaborate to Electrify Infrastructure in NY and SoCal**    Joby Aviation is collaborating with Atlantic Aviation to electrify existing aviation infrastructure in New York and Southern California, paving the way for the launch of Joby’s revolutionary air taxi service. The partnership focuses on activating key Atlantic sites to support quiet, emissions-free air taxis, including the installation of Joby’s Global Electric Aviation Charging System (GEACS). [Read more](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240117374662/en).    [Air Taxi Firms Joby, Archer, Beta Announce Plans to Electrify Airports](https://www.flyingmag.com/air-taxi-firms-joby-archer-beta-announce-plans-to-electrify-airports/) | |

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