

American Aviator Act

Introduced by U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and John Hoeven (R-ND)

Bill establishes aviation program to help Veterans become commercial airline pilots

The American Aviator Act establishes a pilot program at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to authorize competitive grants supporting flight-training services to veterans who are not already military pilots. Flight-training schools that have established pathways to employment with commercial air carriers are eligible for federal grants to recruit and enroll veterans for flight training. Grants funding may be used to provide guidance and flight-training services, including any additional training required to reach proficiency. Grants may also be used to provide tuition, books, training materials, equipment and to cover the cost of a private pilot license.

In selecting flight schools, FAA is encouraged to award grants to flight schools accredited by the Department of Education and may consider a number of factors, including the use of advanced technology and simulation, as well as anticipated time from start of training to employment.

The bill increases career opportunities for veterans and aims to break down barriers that may impede veterans from pursuing careers in aviation. Veterans participating in the program will receive flight training necessary to become a commercial pilot and other certificates, including certified flight instructor. Programs may cover costs beyond what is available through veteran education benefits. The bill also helps ensure there is an adequate future supply of qualified pilots to continue to provide safe and reliable air service to rural airports across the country.

This legislation builds off the Administration's Forces to Flyers research initiative lead by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center.

The American Aviator Act is supported by the Air Line Pilots Association and the Regional Airline Association.

"The American Aviator Act provides Veterans with solid high paying jobs while ensuring the viability of air transportation throughout our country and beyond. Veterans bring all the right elements to the table. Their work ethic, determination, and professionalism make them the perfect candidates to help move our air transportation industry forward." –**Dr. Susan May, President of Fox Valley Technical College**

"The aviation industry is in dire need of qualified aircraft pilots. The American Aviator Act taps into a strong applicant pool of future pilots, who may otherwise not be able to afford financially to get into the industry. This act does two important things; supports our Veterans and supports the stability of our communities' air service." – **Jared Huss, Chief Instructor and Aeronautics Department Chair at Fox Valley Technical College**

"The American Aviator Act is a great way to support our military veterans by providing them an effective and efficient pathway to becoming an airline pilot," said Bob Frisch, COO of Air Wisconsin Airlines. "The Act also helps to address the growing pilot shortage in the airline industry. These are two objectives shared by Air Wisconsin, which will benefit our employees and passengers in Wisconsin. We greatly appreciate Senator Baldwin's leadership on this important issue." –**Bob Frisch, Chief Operating Officer of Air Wisconsin Airlines**