

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Introduces bill to expand flight-training programs for veterans

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WASHINGTON, DC – Today, U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and John Hoeven (R-ND) reintroduced the *American Aviator Act of 2023*, bipartisan legislation to increase opportunities and expand flight-training services for veterans to become commercial airline pilots.

“Every veteran makes tremendous sacrifices to serve our country, and we owe it to them to make sure that their service is honored and they are set up for success after completing their military service.” **said Senator Baldwin.** “This legislation increases opportunities for veterans looking to pursue flight training and careers as commercial airline pilots, meeting a real need for qualified pilots and connecting our veterans to good paying jobs as they return to civilian life.”

“We worked to establish this veterans pilot training demonstration program to support good career opportunities for veterans in commercial aviation and help address our nation’s pilot shortage,” **said Senator Hoeven.** “This is a win-win, and by authorizing this initiative, our legislation will help give more certainty to initiatives like the Vets to Wings program at the University of North Dakota, better enabling this world-class institution to meet future demand for pilots while supporting our veterans.”

The *American Aviator Act* would authorize grant funding through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to support training opportunities for veterans who are not already military pilots. Veterans participating in the program will receive flight training necessary to become a commercial pilot and receive other certifications, including to work as a certified flight instructor. The legislation helps ensure there

are enough qualified pilots in the future to continue providing safe and reliable air service to rural airports across the country.

Flight-training schools that have established pathways to employment with commercial air carriers are eligible for these federal grants to recruit and enroll veterans for flight training. Grant funding may be used for flight-training services, tuition, books, training materials, equipment and to cover the cost of a private pilot license.

“The American Aviator Act would provide a critical pathway for our nation’s veterans to enter the workforce and ensure we have a future supply of qualified pilots to serve communities across the country,” **said Robert Binns, President and Chief Executive Officer at Air Wisconsin.** “I thank Senator Baldwin for leading this important bipartisan legislation.”

“The American Aviator Act provides a promising pathway for Veterans to continue to serve the needs of our nation in the form of safe, reliable, and sustainable air travel. Providing funding to support the development of highly qualified professional pilots is more important than ever, as we see almost daily the warning signs of a strained air travel system,” **said Jared Huss, Director of Aeronautics at Fox Valley Technical College.** “We need to heed these warnings and support the infrastructure that is needed to train these next generations of aviation professionals who will carry us forward. Veterans are ideal candidates for these critical roles, and the *American Aviator Act* aims to recognize and support that.”

Support for the *American Aviator Act* includes the Air Line Pilots Association, Regional Airlines Association, Air Wisconsin, and Fox Valley Technical College.

A one-pager on this legislation is available [here](#). Full text of the bill is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).