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Aviation Manufacturing Industry Coalition Calls for Targeted and Temporary Support to Help Protect American Jobs

Arlington, Va. – Today, a coalition representing the aviation manufacturing industry comprised of the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), the Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA), the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA), the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA), and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) announced their collective support for the bipartisan Preserve Jobs in the Aviation Manufacturing Industry Act introduced by U.S. Representatives Ron Estes (R-KS) and Rick Larsen (D-WA), the companion bill to S. 3705, the Public-Private Partnership to Preserve Jobs in the Aviation Manufacturing Industry Act of 2020 introduced by U.S. Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Mark Warner (D-VA). Both bills would help protect jobs in the aviation manufacturing industry, its supply chains, and aircraft maintenance repair companies that have been devastated by the global drop in air travel. The impact of commercial and government sales on the workforce cannot be understated. Four jobs are created for every million dollars in direct sales revenue generated by the industry.

“With global air travel down 86 percent from a year ago in June, the aviation manufacturing sector has continued to face a near-steady stream of aircraft order cancellations continually decreasing demand for maintenance and repairs. This, in turn, puts the skilled aerospace and defense workforce at risk, forcing significant layoffs and furloughs in companies large and small,” said AIA President and CEO Eric Fanning. “Steps taken earlier this year have worked, but more assistance is needed as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to harm people, communities, and economies worldwide. Representatives Estes and Larsen’s bipartisan bill would provide additional temporary and targeted support to help save American jobs and ensure the aviation and aerospace industry stands ready to support our communities and country through the crisis and recovery.”

“ARSA is extremely grateful to Representatives Estes and Larsen for introducing this important legislation. Pandemic-related economic disruptions have decimated America’s aviation maintenance industry and there’s very little light at the end of the tunnel,” said ARSA Executive Vice President Christian Klein. “The Estes-Larsen bill is a lifeline for an industry that’s seen revenues fall by roughly half and that may have lost more than 50,000 workers—a quarter of our workforce—in recent months. It will save jobs in the near-term—particularly in aviation-heavy states like Kansas and Washington—and help ensure that when the aviation sector begins to recover, repair stations will still have the technical talent they need to keep the nation’s aircraft fleet operating safely.”

“The aviation manufacturing and maintenance industry continues to face stiff headwinds from the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud and are deeply grateful to Representatives Estes and Larsen for their work to support the industry’s highly skilled
workforce as well as Senators Moran and Warner for introducing similar legislation in the Senate. Given that general and commercial aviation are significant contributors to the U.S. economy, it is essential that both industry and government partner together to protect aviation manufacturing and maintenance jobs in this vital sector. I am very pleased to join with my fellow industry association leaders, and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, in supporting these legislative initiative to sustain our incredible aviation manufacturing workforce and companies during these uncertain times,” said Pete Bunce, GAMA President and CEO.

“The aerospace and defense workforce is a critical component of our national security. Uniquely skilled, the members of that workforce produce the best commercial and military equipment in the world. We cannot afford to lose them as they are key to the recovery of the sector and, just as importantly, developing the next skilled, cleared generation keeping us at the cutting edge,” said Gen. Hawk Carlisle, NDIA President and CEO.

“We applaud Reps. Larsen and Estes for introducing this innovative payroll support legislation. Saving this critical industry and the livelihoods of the men and women who have made the aerospace sector thrive for generations is our top legislative priority,” said IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr. “The federal funding authorized by this bill will be used for the sole purpose of keeping working families on the job and off of unemployment. As the largest aerospace and defense union in America, we proudly endorse this much-needed legislation and hope it is passed swiftly with bipartisan support.”

Government relief has proven effective at helping keep employees on payroll during the crisis. A recent study found that the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) alone saved between 1.5 and 3.5 million jobs. The bipartisan bills propose a public-private partnership between government and industry to help prevent further layoffs. The Estes-Larsen bill is cosponsored by Representatives Roger Marshall, M.D. (R-KS), Tom Cole (R-OK), Gerry Connolly (D-VA), and Sharice Davids (D-KS). The Moran-Warner bill is cosponsored by Senators Pat Roberts (R-KS), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Roy Blunt (R-MO), and Doug Jones (D-AL). Both bills provide an innovative path forward for the aviation manufacturing and maintenance industry. Congressional leadership must now come together in support of this critical manufacturing sector and workforce.

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