

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2021

The U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Attn: Patricia Watts, Ph.D., Grants Officer
800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20591
Attn:
NextGen Grants Management Branch (ANG-A19)
NextGen Management Services (ANG-A)

Dear FAA Technical Evaluation Team:

We are writing to express our support for the application submitted by the University of North Dakota (UND) to the FAA Aviation Maintenance Pilot Workforce Development Grant Program. Thank you for your consideration

Aviation is an important part of North Dakota's heritage and continues to play a critical role in our state's economy to this day. From passenger and cargo transportation to agriculture and energy operations, we rely on aircraft for a wide range of needs. Further, our state has grown into a primary hub of research, development, training and operations for the unmanned aerial systems (UAS) industry. As a result, demand continues to grow for qualified pilots, which is critical to the safe and efficient operation of both manned and unmanned aircraft.

That's why we worked to establish and fund this workforce development program. UND already stands as a world-class aviation school. If funded, the university would expand its outreach efforts to middle and high school students in the region to demonstrate UAS technology and highlight careers operating these aircraft. This would include providing the opportunity to earn a Part 107 certification to fly unmanned aircraft, and establishing an aerospace camp at the university for high school students. Such a program would help spark student interest in this field earlier and help address the ongoing shortage of qualified UAS pilots.

Accordingly, we hope this application receives your favorable consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Please keep us informed of the review process, and feel free to contact our offices with any updates or inquiries you may have.

Sincerely,



John Hoeven
U.S. Senator



Kevin Cramer
U.S. Senator



Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress