

Representative Ken McCarty

State Capitol Room 428

Juneau, AK 99801

Re: HB 108

Representative McCarty,

The NextGen Aviation Club, a growing and vibrant sector of the Alaska Airmen's Association nearly 2,000 members, strongly supports House Bill 108 and its efforts to establish aviation trade school classes for high school students throughout Alaska. The local aviation industry is suffering from a declining pool of young aviation professionals. Pilots, mechanics, air traffic controllers, and those with other aviation-related professions are retiring, and many of their positions remain vacant.

Our state, which relies heavily on air travel and cargo transport, needs to foster an interest in aviation more effectively in our young citizens. Our membership believes many high school students yearn for alternatives to traditional collegiate degrees. HB 108 introduces aviation career pathways to young people at a time in their lives when they make decisions that solidify lifelong careers. If we show students they can learn skillsets that yield well-paying jobs, we believe more of these young Alaskans will choose to carry out their careers in this state instead of searching for opportunities elsewhere.

Thank you earnestly for sponsoring such important and impactful legislation. We support this bill completely.

Sincerely,

The NextGen Aviation Club

Anchorage, AK