

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6270

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pilot program to provide grants related to advanced air mobility infrastructure, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 14, 2021

Mr. LARSEN of Washington (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Ms. TITUS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pilot program to provide grants related to advanced air mobility infrastructure, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Advanced Aviation In-
5 frastructure Modernization Act” or the “AAIM Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE PILOT**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
4 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall es-
5 tablish a pilot program to provide grants that—

6 (1) assist an eligible entity to plan for the de-
7 velopment and deployment of infrastructure nec-
8 essary to facilitate AAM operations in the United
9 States; and

10 (2) make funding available for costs directly re-
11 lated to construction of public-use vertiports or asso-
12 ciated infrastructure.

13 (b) PLANNING GRANTS.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide
15 grants to eligible entities to develop comprehensive
16 plans under paragraph (2) related to AAM infra-
17 structure.

18 (2) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

19 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
20 after receiving a grant under this subsection, an
21 eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a
22 comprehensive plan in a format that may be
23 published on the website of the Department of
24 Transportation.

25 (B) PLAN CONTENTS.—The Secretary
26 shall establish content requirements for com-

1 comprehensive plans submitted under this sub-
2 section, which may include the following:

3 (i) The identification of planned or
4 potential public-use or private-use vertiport
5 locations.

6 (ii) A description of infrastructure
7 necessary to support AAM operations.

8 (iii) A description of types of planned
9 or potential AAM operations.

10 (iv) The identification of physical and
11 digital infrastructure required to meet the
12 standards for vertiport design and per-
13 formance characteristics established by the
14 Federal Aviation Administration (as in ef-
15 fect on the date on which the Secretary
16 issues a grant to an eligible entity), includ-
17 ing modifications to existing infrastructure
18 and ground sensors, electric charging and
19 other fueling requirements, electric utility
20 requirements, wireless and cybersecurity
21 requirements, and other necessary hard-
22 ware or software.

23 (v) A description of potential environ-
24 mental effects of planned construction or
25 siting of public-use vertiports, including ef-

1 forts to reduce the adverse effects of po-
2 tential aviation noise.

3 (vi) A description of how planned pub-
4 lic-use or private-use vertiport locations,
5 including new or repurposed infrastruc-
6 ture, fit into existing State and local trans-
7 portation systems and networks, includ-
8 ing—

9 (I) connectivity to existing public
10 transportation hubs and intermodal
11 and multimodal facilities; and

12 (II) opportunities to create new
13 service to areas underserved by air
14 transportation, without compromising
15 safety and efficiency of other facilities
16 and airspace users.

17 (vii) A description of how public-use
18 vertiport planning will be incorporated in
19 State or metropolitan planning documents.

20 (viii) The identification of the process
21 an eligible entity will undertake to ensure
22 an adequate level of community engage-
23 ment for planned public-use vertiport loca-
24 tions and planned or anticipated AAM op-
25 erations, including engagement with under-

1 served communities, individuals with dis-
2 abilities, and racial and ethnic minorities,
3 to address equity of access and other prior-
4 ities.

5 (ix) The identification of the actions
6 necessary for an eligible entity to under-
7 take the construction of public-use
8 vertiports, such as planning studies to as-
9 sess existing infrastructure, environmental
10 studies, studies of projected economic ben-
11 efit to the community, lease or acquisition
12 of an easement or land for new infrastruc-
13 ture, and activities related to other capital
14 costs.

15 (x) The identification of State, local,
16 or private sources of funding an eligible
17 entity may use to assist with the construc-
18 tion or operation of a public-use vertiport.

19 (3) APPLICATION.—To apply for a grant under
20 this subsection, an eligible entity shall provide to the
21 Secretary an application in such form, at such time,
22 and containing such information as the Secretary
23 may require.

24 (4) SELECTION.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants
2 under this subsection, the Secretary shall con-
3 sider the following:

4 (i) Geographic diversity.

5 (ii) The need for comprehensive plans
6 that—

7 (I) facilitate the safe integration
8 of AAM operations into the National
9 Airspace System;

10 (II) improve transportation safe-
11 ty, connectivity, access, and equity in
12 both rural and urban regions in the
13 United States;

14 (III) leverage existing public
15 transportation systems and intermodal
16 and multimodal facilities;

17 (IV) reduce surface congestion
18 and the environmental impacts of
19 transportation;

20 (V) grow the economy and create
21 jobs in the United States; and

22 (VI) encourage community en-
23 gagement when planning for AAM re-
24 lated infrastructure.

1 (B) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall
2 prioritize awarding grants under this subsection
3 to eligible entities that partner with commercial
4 AAM entities, institutions of higher education,
5 research institutions, or other relevant stake-
6 holders to develop and prepare a comprehensive
7 plan.

8 (5) GRANT AMOUNT.—Each grant made under
9 this subsection shall be made in an amount that is
10 not more than \$1,000,000.

11 (6) BRIEFING.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180
13 days after the first comprehensive plan is sub-
14 mitted under paragraph (2), and every 180
15 days thereafter, the Secretary shall provide a
16 briefing to the appropriate committees of Con-
17 gress on the comprehensive plans submitted to
18 the Secretary under such paragraph.

19 (B) CONTENTS.—The briefing required
20 under subparagraph (A) shall include—

21 (i) an evaluation of all planned or pro-
22 posed public-use vertiport locations in-
23 cluded in the comprehensive plans sub-
24 mitted under paragraph (2) and how such
25 planned or proposed public-use vertiport

locations may fit into the overall United States transportation system and network; and

(ii) a description of lessons or best practices learned through the review of comprehensive plans and how the Secretary will incorporate any such lessons or best practices into Federal standards or guidance for the design and operation of AAM infrastructure and facilities.

(c) CONSTRUCTION GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may award grants to covered recipients to carry out construction activities described under paragraph (2).

(2) ELIGIBLE USES.—A covered recipient may use grant funds awarded under this subsection for design, bidding, and environmental study activities, and other capital costs, as the Secretary determines appropriate, directly related to the construction of a public-use vertiport or associated infrastructure pursuant to the comprehensive plan submitted by such covered recipient.

(3) REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of subsections (b) and (c) of section 47112 of title 49, United States Code, and subsections (a) and (b) of

1 section 50101 of such title, shall apply to a grant
2 awarded under this subsection.

3 (4) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not
4 award a grant under this subsection—

5 (A) for the acquisition, conversion, or ret-
6 rofitting of AAM aircraft; or

7 (B) for the construction of private-use
8 vertiports or associated infrastructure.

9 (5) GRANT TIMING.—The Secretary may not
10 issue a grant under this subsection until—

11 (A) the Administrator of the Federal Avia-
12 tion Administration has—

13 (i) certified 2 or more models of air-
14 craft designed to provide AAM transpor-
15 tation under part 23, 25, 27, or 29 of title
16 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

17 (ii) published an advisory circular con-
18 taining appropriate standards for vertiport
19 design and performance characteristics;
20 and

21 (B) the Secretary has—

22 (i) determined that 2 or more AAM
23 operators hold certificates under part 119
24 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations,
25 for such operators to perform air carrier

1 operations covered under part 135 of such
2 title; and

3 (ii) issued, to 2 or more air carriers
4 formed to provide AAM transportation,
5 certificates under chapter 411 of title 49,
6 United States Code.

7 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

8 (1) AUTHORIZATION.—There are authorized to
9 be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this
10 section \$12,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2022
11 and 2023, to remain available until expended.

12 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the
13 amounts made available under paragraph (1), the
14 Secretary may retain up to 1 percent for personnel,
15 contracting, and other costs to establish and admin-
16 ister the pilot program under this section.

17 (e) TERMINATION.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—No grant may be awarded
19 under this section after September 30, 2023.

20 (2) CONTINUED FUNDING.—Funds authorized
21 to be appropriated pursuant to subsection (d) may
22 be expended after September 30, 2023—

23 (A) for grants awarded prior to September
24 30, 2023; and

25 (B) for administrative expenses.

1 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

2 (1) ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY; AAM.—The terms
3 “advanced air mobility” and “AAM” mean an air
4 transportation system that transports individuals
5 and property between points in the United States
6 using aircraft, such as remotely piloted, autonomous,
7 or vertical take-off and landing aircraft, including
8 those powered by electric or hybrid driven propul-
9 sion, in both controlled and uncontrolled airspace.

10 (2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
11 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
12 gress” means the Committee on Transportation and
13 Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and
14 the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Trans-
15 portation of the Senate.

16 (3) COMMERCIAL AAM ENTITIES.—The term
17 “commercial AAM entities” means—

18 (A) manufacturers of aircraft, avionics,
19 propulsion systems, and air traffic management
20 systems related to AAM; and

21 (B) intended commercial operators of AAM
22 aircraft and systems.

23 (4) COVERED RECIPIENT.—The term “covered
24 recipient” means the recipient of a grant under sub-

1 section (b) who has submitted a comprehensive
2 plan—

3 (A) that has been reviewed by the Sec-
4 retary pursuant to subsection (b); and

5 (B) that the Secretary has determined con-
6 tains proposed projects that comply with the
7 standards for vertiport design and performance
8 characteristics described in a published advisory
9 circular.

10 (5) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
11 ty” means—

12 (A) a State, local, or Tribal government,
13 including a political subdivision thereof;

14 (B) an airport sponsor;

15 (C) a transit agency;

16 (D) a port authority;

17 (E) a metropolitan planning organization;

18 or

19 (F) any combination or consortium of the
20 entities described in subparagraphs (A) through
21 (E).

22 (6) METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZA-
23 TION.—The term “metropolitan planning organiza-
24 tion” has the meaning given such term in section
25 5303(b) of title 49, United States Code.

1 (7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of Transportation.

3 (8) PUBLIC-USE VERTIPOINT.—The term “pub-
4 lic-use vertiport” means a designated location used
5 or intended to be used for public purposes and to
6 support AAM operations, including the landing,
7 takeoff, loading, taxiing, parking, and storage of
8 vertical take-off and landing aircraft.

9 (9) STATE.—The term “State” means a State
10 of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puer-
11 to Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the
12 Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

13 (10) VERTICAL TAKE-OFF AND LANDING AIR-
14 CRAFT.—The term “vertical take-off and landing
15 aircraft” means an aircraft with lift/thrust units
16 used to generate powered lift and control and with
17 2 or more lift/thrust units used to provide lift during
18 vertical take-off or landing.

19 **SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

20 Nothing in this Act may be construed as conferring
21 upon any person, State, local, or Tribal government the
22 authority to determine the safety of any AAM operation
23 or the feasibility of simultaneous operations by AAM and

- 1 conventional aircraft within any given area of the National
- 2 Airspace System.

