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## **Senate Approves Whitaker as FAA Head**

*New FAA administrator enjoys broad industry support.*

*Alexandria, Va. (Oct. 24, 2023)* – Following a 98-0 bipartisan vote by the US Senate, Michael G. Whitaker was approved on Tuesday to lead the FAA. He is most recently the chief operating officer of Supernal, Hyundai’s advanced air mobility (AAM) company. Whitaker also has previous FAA experience: from 2013–14, he served as the deputy administrator, where he led the agency’s efforts to modernize the US National Airspace System.

“Having worked closely with Mike during my time at FAA, I have seen firsthand that he has the knowledge and skill set to effectively lead the agency,” says HAI President and CEO James Viola, who left the FAA after serving as the director of General Aviation Safety Assurance.

During his confirmation hearing, Whitaker pledged to tackle the personnel shortages, including air traffic controllers, pilots, and maintenance technicians, that are threatening aviation operations and growth, saying, “I would view my role as administrator as chief recruitment officer, certainly for the FAA, but also for the industry.”

Whitaker is a well-respected aviation policy leader, with more than 30 years of experience. Prior to his positions at Supernal and the FAA, he worked for several airlines.

Following his nomination by the Biden Administration, Whitaker was endorsed by a broad swath of the aviation community, including HAI, airlines, unions, and general aviation associations. His Senate confirmation hearing was swift and lacked controversy.

“Aviation — particularly vertical aviation — is evolving at a rapid pace, and new entrants will soon take to the skies. Mike’s background in AAM will be particularly valuable to the future of our industry,” Viola says.

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