



Contributor



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James Viola Testifies Before House Aviation Subcommittee

On Jul. 13, HAI President and CEO James Viola testified before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation. The hearing, titled “The State of General Aviation,” provided an opportunity for industry leaders to explain the challenges and opportunities of their segments. Witnesses identified key issues and provided recommendations for the committee to consider in next year’s FAA Reauthorization legislation.

Viola (pictured below during the hearing) addressed several issues critical for the vertical lift industry, such as the safe integration of new aviation technology into the airspace, community compatibility, sustainability, and workforce development.

HAI thanks the committee for hosting this hearing and inviting Viola to share HAI's perspective on the state of the vertical lift industry and the aviation industry at large.



Click [here](#) to view HAI's press release on the hearing. A recording of the hearing and more information on the event is available to view [here](#), on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee website.

FAA Seeking Comments from Part 135, Part 91 Operators

The FAA is initiating an information collection involving information relating to rules governing helicopter air ambulance (HAA), commercial helicopter, and Part 91 helicopter operations. Following several recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board, the FAA aims to improve the safety record of helicopter air ambulances through better oversight of their operations.

The FAA invites public comments from Part 135 HAA operators, Part 135 helicopter commercial operators, and Part 91 helicopter operators. HAI encourages members to submit their comments by Sep. 6, 2022.

Comments may be submitted by electronic docket at www.regulations.gov under the docket ID FAA-2022-0913; by fax, to 412-

239-3063; or by mail, to Sandra L. Ray, 1187 Thorn Run Road, Suite 200, Coraopolis, PA 15108.

House to Begin Voting on Appropriations Bills

The House plans to begin voting on appropriations bills in July. House appropriators approved all 12 spending measures for FY 2023 at the end of June, based on a \$1.6 trillion top line. H.R.8294, the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations Act, 2023, was approved on Jun. 30 with a 32–24 vote.

House leadership plans to bring a six-bill minibuss to the floor the week of Jul. 18. This minibuss package would be led by the THUD bill and would also contain the bills for the Agriculture – FDA; Energy and Water Development; Financial Services and General Government; Interior – Environment; and Military Construction – Veterans Affairs portions. A second minibuss could also come to the floor this month.

The THUD appropriations bill provides \$90.9 billion in funding, an increase of \$9.9 billion, or more than 12%, above FY 2022 funding levels. The Department of Transportation is set to receive \$837 million of the total amount. Of this amount, approximately \$18.7 billion is portioned for the FAA, including \$1.6 billion for aviation safety and \$273 million for discretionary Airport Improvement Program grants and projects. This is \$193 million above the funding levels for FY 2022.

An additional \$775 million is set aside for national infrastructure investments such as the RAISE program. At least 5% of the amounts provided for national infrastructure investment must be made available for the planning, preparation, or design of eligible projects and must prioritize transit-oriented projects and development, including multimodal projects that can support advanced air mobility operations.

HAI Attends Tarkio Air Show, Participates in Town Hall

James Viola, HAI president and CEO; Cade Clark, HAI VP of government affairs; and John Shea, HAI director of government affairs, attended the 14th Annual Wingnuts Flying Circus air show in Tarkio, Missouri, Jul. 8–9. The show was jointly hosted by the Wingnuts Flying Circus and Rep. Sam Graves (R-Mo.-06), ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

The weekend’s events included a fly-in, a town-hall discussion hosted by Rep. Graves, and an impressive air show by the Wingnuts Flying Circus. HAI participated in the fly-in on Friday, Jul. 8. Viola flew into the event in

his own helicopter, an R44 branded with the HAI logo. While in Tarkio, Viola participated in a town-hall discussion alongside general aviation leaders and Congressmen Graves, Rick Larsen (D-Wash.-02), and Garret Graves (R-La.-06). Their discussion focused on industry priorities and the 2023 FAA Reauthorization legislation. HAI's three representatives met and built relationships with general aviation professionals, industry leaders, and elected officials and shared their mutual passion for flying.

HAI International News

EU Council Working Party on Aviation Meeting

The European Union (EU) Council Working Party on Aviation met in Brussels, Belgium, on Thursday, Jul. 14, to discuss upcoming aviation plans and issue areas. The working party first received a debrief of the 226th International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Council Session from the European Commission services. Following this debrief, there was a declaration for the ICAO high-level meeting on long-term aspirational goals, where members of the working party exchanged views regarding an information note prepared by the commission. Lastly, the working party considered the Single European Sky (SES) 2+ package, an initiative that aims to make EU airspace less fragmented and improve air traffic management. The party debriefed the technical meeting on Jul. 13 and discussed a nonpaper prepared by the presidency.

European Helicopter Association (EHA) Contribution

ReFuelEU Aviation Report

On Jul. 7, the European Parliament plenary held a debate and vote on the ReFuelEU Aviation report. The [ReFuelEU initiative](#) is part of the "Fit for 55" package and aims to clean up the air transport sector.

Søren Gade (RE, DK), rapporteur, recognized the need for aviation to play its part in the aim of an overall reduction of transport greenhouse gas emissions by 90% in 2050. However, in his report, he stressed that aviation needs a tailored approach because it is particularly difficult to decarbonize.

The Parliament report, first adopted by the TRAN Committee, increased the minimum share of synthetic aviation fuel that should be made available in EU airports. The rapporteur also wanted to broaden the

definition of synthetic aviation fuel. In his report, he underlined the need for better control and better transparency in order to address non-CO₂ emissions.

Later in the day, the Parliament plenary voted on the report. MEPs adopted the report, as amended, with 334 votes in favor, 95 against, and 153 abstentions.

Parliament adopted its position on new draft EU rules to increase the uptake of sustainable fuels by EU planes and airports in order to cut emissions from aviation and ensure Europe becomes climate neutral by 2050.

Accelerated introduction of sustainable fuels

The MEPs increased the European Commission's original proposal for the minimum share of a sustainable aviation fuel that should be made available at EU airports. From 2025, this share should be 2%, increasing to 37% in 2040 and 85% by 2050, taking into account the potential of electricity and hydrogen in the overall fuel mix. (The Commission proposed 32% for 2040 and 63% for 2050.)

More types of sustainable fuel, including electricity and hydrogen

Parliament amended the proposed definition of sustainable aviation fuel, a term that covers synthetic fuels or certain biofuels, produced from agricultural or forestry residues, algae, bio-waste, or used cooking oil.

Under their definition, MEPs included recycled carbon fuels produced from waste processing gas and exhaust gas derived from production processes in industrial installations. They also suggested that some biofuels produced from animal fats or distillates could be included in the aviation fuel mix for a limited time (until 2034). However, the MEPs excluded feed and food crop – based fuels and those derived from palm oil, soy-derived materials, and soap stock because they do not align with the proposed sustainability criteria.

The MEPs also included renewable electricity and hydrogen as part of a sustainable fuel mix, as both are promising technologies that could progressively contribute to the decarbonization of air transport. According to the draft rules, EU airports should facilitate aircraft operators' access to sustainable aviation fuels, including infrastructure for hydrogen refueling and electric recharging.

New fund and green labeling

Parliament proposed the creation of a Sustainable Aviation Fund from 2023 to 2050 to accelerate the decarbonization of the aviation sector and support investment in sustainable aviation fuels, innovative aircraft propulsion technologies, and research for new engines. The fund would be supplemented by penalties generated by the enforcement of these rules.

In order to further promote the decarbonization of the aviation sector and to inform the public about greener aviation, the MEPs tasked the commission with developing by 2024 an EU labeling system on the environmental performance of aircraft, operators, and commercial flights.

Parliament is now ready to start negotiations with member states.

Supporting documents: [Report](#) | [Voting list](#) |

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