

Update: Congressional Activity Relevant to EPAS Initiatives

Date: June 8, 2025

This past week, House Chair of the Subcommittee on Aviation, Troy Nehls, led two highly important conferences on Capitol Hill:

1. **FAA Reauthorization Act Hearing:**

A hearing on the status of execution of all the provisions in last year's FAA Reauthorization Act.

2. **ATC Working Meeting:**

A working meeting of technology industry leaders and ATC specialists to discuss the core problems in—and practical remedies to—America's air traffic control system. Notably, \$12.5 billion in additional ATCS spending was just included in the House-passed version of the “big, beautiful” reconciliation bill.

Two points about these developments are especially relevant to EPAS' effort to raise the FAR Part 121 airline pilot retirement age limit:

1. Chair Nehls' Leadership:

Chair Nehls was and remains the legislative driver of the Let Experienced Pilots Fly Act. His progression to Chair of Aviation is pivotal to the development and passage of all relevant regulation, law, and policy. Congress operates on a tiered system of bill passage, heavily relying on the specialized committees' production and guidance. Having a supporter of our goals at this foundational level of influence is not just helpful—it is essential.

2. Air Traffic Control Experience Deficit:

Air Traffic Control is experiencing the same shortage of experienced personnel and a proportional rise in risk as our

cockpits. While ATC's facility, equipment, and technology challenges are even greater than those faced in aviation operations, these issues amplify the need to retain experienced staff during the transition period. This also underscores the need for experienced pilots, who are better equipped to recognize and respond to ATC errors before they escalate into disasters.

The Path Forward

The current focus on ATC issues adds momentum to our call to Raise the Age. EPAS' strong relationships with Chair Nehls (Aviation), Chair Graves (House Transportation and Infrastructure), and developing relationships with Chair Moran (Senate Aviation) and Chair Cruz (Senate Commerce)—along with their Ranking Member counterparts—will be especially constructive in helping Congress advance the next pilot age bill. This is particularly true as ICAO is leveraged to change the international benchmark.