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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | April 19, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Applauds Final Passage of FAA Bill**  *Secures Policies to Spur Economic Growth in Nevada*  **(Washington, DC)** – Today, U.S. Senator Dean Heller applauded the passage of the [*Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016*](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/9270731d-2db7-4c87-a2c3-b79f98bcdcef/Thune-Nelson%20Substitute%203464.pdf) (H.R.636). As a member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, Senator Heller has worked closely with Chairman John Thune (R-SD) on developing a multi-year Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill over the past year.  **“I applaud the Senate’s action to pass this important legislation with bipartisan support. The FAA bill contains many priorities benefitting our state. I’m especially pleased many of the provisions I fought for were incorporated into the final bill. These provisions position Nevada well to expand travel and tourism, improve security, capitalize high-tech job opportunities related to unmanned aircraft systems, and provide our nation’s veterans additional employment opportunities,”** said Senator Dean Heller.  **Heller Priorities Already Approved by the Senate:**  [**Heller’s Veterans Employment Amendment**](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/322c1e58-959e-4cac-ae19-06cb7afdb078/Heller%20UAS%20Veteran%20Employment%20Amendment%203495.pdf)   * Given the new career opportunities that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) may have in the field of Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) technology, this amendment requires the FAA to assess whether any of these new occupations can be applied to the FAA’s Veterans’ Employment Program. * As a member of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, Senator Heller wants to ensure veterans who have returned home from service have strong employment opportunities, especially given the skills they’ve obtained during service.   [**UAS Test Site Authorization Extension**](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/980cc1f7-49c2-4821-934d-5ccd414afde2/Hoeven-Heller-Warner-Murkowski-Schumer-Reid-Kaine%20UAS%20Amendment%203500.pdf)   * With Nevada serving as one of the six FAA unmanned aircraft systems research and test sites across the country, it is important to extend their authorizations so they can lead the nation in the researching, developing and testing of the latest in UAS technologies. * This amendment extends each site’s authorization in the bill from eighteen months to five years. Senator Heller is teaming up with Senator Hoeven (R-ND) and others who represent states operating the test sites on this [amendment](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/980cc1f7-49c2-4821-934d-5ccd414afde2/Hoeven-Heller-Warner-Murkowski-Schumer-Reid-Kaine%20UAS%20Amendment%203500.pdf).  |  | | --- | | **Heller Provisions Already Included in the Committee-Passed Bill:**   * The Small Community Air Service Development Program provides small airports with additional resources to attract new airline routes; however, the law stipulates that only airports considered small hubs as of 1997 are eligible for the program. Sec. 3202(b) updates the law to ensure airports, like the Reno-Tahoe International Airport, that are currently not eligible but are considered small hubs based off current air traffic can compete for these resources. This affects eight other airports. * Since Nevada is one of the six UAS test site locations, it will drive drone-related technological research and economic growth statewide. The bill includes [Senator Heller’s priorities](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=7F4A1158-C0BF-4D95-A10E-E1B21B721B4E) to provide Nevada’s [testing sites](http://diversifynevada.com/key-industries/aerospace-defense/uav), such as Reno-Stead Airport, Fallon Municipal Airport, Nellis Air Force Base, and the Boulder City Municipal Airport, with more autonomy and flexibility to partner with industry to test this emerging technology. This includes establishing annual research plans for test sites to contribute to authorizing beyond line-of-sight operations at these sites. * Sec.1302 provides airports like McCarran International Airport the flexibility to use federal infrastructure dollars for construction of facilities that offer multiple modes of transportation (i.e. bus, rail, Uber, and taxis). This provision could improve tourist access and facilitate economic development opportunities in Nevada. * Sec.2132 makes it clear that industries like mining can utilize UASs for inspections, which reduces risks to workers in underground facilities.   The following Heller amendments were adopted into the FAA Bill by the [Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=16D8FD5D-0DB5-4BEC-A323-48A6C4EBCD3C) Committee on March 16, 2016:   * Heller-Cantwell [UAS Carriage Amendment](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=16D8FD5D-0DB5-4BEC-A323-48A6C4EBCD3C) directs the Department of Transportation (DOT) to establish a streamlined air carrier certification program tailored for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) carrying property, like packages.      * Klobuchar-Heller-Blumenthal Human Trafficking Amendment requires air carriers to provide training to flight attendants to combat human trafficking, including training with respect to common indicators of human trafficking and best practices for reporting suspected human trafficking to law enforcement officers. Heller’s strong history on combatting human trafficking can be found [HERE](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=26685325-b451-44f7-8ba0-ca99fa0b9977). * The Schatz-Heller Tourism Amendment adds tourism stakeholders, like the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, and the Elko Convention and Visitors Authority, to the Future Aviation Infrastructure and Financing Study provision in the bill. |   ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |