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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov)/[Michawn Rich](mailto:michawn_rich@heller.senate.gov) | | March 9, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Secures Legislative Priorities in Senate Aviation Bill**  **(Washington, DC)**– Today, U.S. Dean Heller (R-NV) announced that many of his top legislative priorities, including those that will directly benefit Nevadans, were included in the recently introduced [*Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization* *Act of 2016*](http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/992cabb4-bd39-474e-b8a7-8056ddd11ca9/DC007B30B900E86BC8D72E87BA555A73.faa-bill-text.pdf), the Senate’s Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization legislation. 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 FAA reauthorization bill over the past year.  “A safe and efficient air traffic control system is crucial to our nation’s security and economic health. Given the major role aviation plays in Nevada’s economy, I am particularly grateful to have secured numerous priorities in the FAA reauthorization legislation that will benefit our state. I look forward to working with Chairman Thune as the Senate moves this critical legislation forward,”said **Senator Dean Heller**.  **Heller legislative priorities included in the FAA Reauthorization 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 Reno Tahoe International Airport, who 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 Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) test site locations, it will drive drone-related technological research and economic growth statewide. Sec.2122 and 2123 include Senator Heller’s priorities 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 ensures airports like Las Vegas McCarran airport can 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.   ###  [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) |