

## Veteran's Flight Training Support

### Problem/Issue Statement

Kansas State University is home to the state's largest military population in higher education. We offer both on base, online, and on campus training programs for our veterans. However, the initial training for veteran's seeking a career in professional piloting is not covered by current GI Bill benefits. The lack of funding for private pilot is a barrier to entry for many veterans. Additionally, the inflexibility of the flight benefits negatively impacts the progress of veteran students. For example, students who are excelling in their training and complete their flight certification in reduced time are not able to proceed to their next course until the following semester. This policy unnecessarily extends the flight training time for these students.

### Request Description

Supporting soldiers transitioning from active duty to civilian life is of national importance. We recommend a review of the GI Bill and consideration to restore funding to support veteran's conducting flight training at Part 141 flight schools. For example, private pilot is not currently covered which creates a barrier and burden on our veteran students pursuing aviation careers. We encourage a review of VA funding policies for manned aviation flight training and request for expansion of veteran's flight training support beyond chapter 31 & 33. For example, students currently on Chapter 35 benefits could greatly benefit if their flight fees were covered. Additionally, there are students who switch back and forth between benefit types due to their pursuit of a career in professional piloting. This switching causes another barrier for students and would not be needed if all chapters included the flight fee support.

### Request Goals and Expected Outcomes

With support for veterans to start their flight training, it reduces barriers to entry and increases civilian job opportunities as well as the opportunity to accelerate military rank advancement for those continuing their military career. Currently, veteran students are not allowed to be flexible in an industry that demands it. With the review of the VA flight training policies for manned flight training, consideration should be made for structured flexibility. For example, one option could be to have an hour requirement with an option of a +/- 10-hour variance around the published flight hour total. That would help students that excel as well as those that may need additional hours to meet the training requirements. This range of hours, could also be applied to flight, simulator, and ground training. Building in some structured flexibility allows training providers to better serve the students' needs and instruct each individual student.



### Appropriations Subcommittee

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

### Request Type

Funding Request

Bill Language Request