

Bradley Abate

Director

Harnett Regional Jetport

615 Airport Road

Erwin, NC 28339

910-814-2740

www.harnett.org/airport

March 6, 2026

The Honorable Brad Knott

U.S. House of Representatives

1239 Longworth House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Knott,

On behalf of Harnett Regional Jetport, I am writing to express our strong support for Elizabeth City State University's request for congressional funding to acquire twelve flight simulators as part of its expanding aviation program.

Elizabeth City State University is taking significant steps to strengthen North Carolina's aviation workforce pipeline by pursuing the development of a satellite campus flight hub in partnership with Harnett Regional Jetport. This collaboration represents a strategic investment in our region's economic growth, workforce development, and long-term competitiveness in the aviation and aerospace sectors.

The addition of twelve state-of-the-art simulators is critical to the success of this initiative. These simulators will:

- Expand access to high-quality, FAA-aligned flight training
- Increase student enrollment capacity in aviation degree programs
- Reduce training costs while enhancing safety and proficiency
- Accelerate the development of much-needed commercial pilots and aviation professionals

By locating a satellite flight hub at Harnett Regional Jetport, ECSU will be able to leverage our growing aviation infrastructure, available airspace, and community support to create a robust, hands-on training environment. This partnership will directly benefit students across North Carolina—particularly those seeking affordable, accessible pathways into aviation careers.

The aviation industry continues to face a nationwide pilot and technician shortage. Supporting ECSU's simulator funding request is not simply an investment in equipment—it is an investment in workforce readiness, regional economic development, and the future of aviation in our state.



HARNETT REGIONAL JETPORT

Harnett Regional Jetport fully supports this request and stands ready to partner with Elizabeth City State University to ensure the success of this transformative initiative. We respectfully urge your support for this critical funding.

Thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to strengthening educational and economic opportunities across our region. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this partnership further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bradley Abate".

Bradley Abate
Director
Harnett Regional Jetport
babate@harnett.org
910-814-6122

**Letter of Support for Enhanced ATC and Flight Simulation Capacity
Elizabeth City State University Aviation Science Program**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for Elizabeth City State University's efforts to expand and modernize its flight and Air Traffic Control (ATC) training simulators in support of the university's Aviation Science Degree Program and its Enhanced Air Traffic-Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) curriculum.

As the Air Traffic Manager and Control Tower Supervisor at the Elizabeth City Air Station, I work daily within the National Airspace System and witness firsthand the increasing demand for highly trained aviation professionals. The aviation industry, including the air traffic control workforce, continues to face significant staffing shortages. Across the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) system, many facilities are operating below optimal staffing levels as experienced controllers retire, and traffic volumes continue to grow. Addressing this shortage requires a strong pipeline of well-trained candidates who are prepared to enter the workforce with a solid foundation in airspace management, communication procedures, and operational decision-making.

Elizabeth City State University plays a critical role in developing that pipeline. The university's aviation program has established itself as a valuable regional and national contributor to aviation workforce development. Graduates from the program enter the aviation field with both academic knowledge and practical experience, helping strengthen the safety and efficiency of the national airspace system.

The expansion of modern flight and ATC simulators is an important step in maintaining the program's effectiveness and alignment with FAA training standards. Modern simulation technology allows students to experience realistic flight, tower, radar, and airport operations in a controlled learning environment. These systems enable instructors to replicate complex traffic scenarios, varying weather conditions, and operational challenges that mirror real-world situations faced by controllers and pilots.

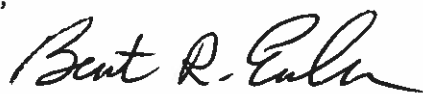
For the Enhanced AT-CTI program in particular, access to advanced, FAA-aligned ATC simulation platforms is essential. Updated simulators that meet current FAA requirements provide students with opportunities to practice phraseology, sequencing, separation standards, and workload management before entering professional training environments. This hands-on experience significantly improves student preparedness and enhances the transition from academic instruction to operational training within the FAA or other aviation organizations.

From an operational perspective, the benefit of such training cannot be overstated. Students who train on modern ATC simulators gain familiarity with the pace and complexity of real-world tower operations. This early exposure builds situational awareness, communication discipline, and confidence. All of these are skills that are essential for maintaining safety in increasingly busy airspace environments.

Additionally, increasing the number of simulators will allow Elizabeth City State University to expand training capacity, accommodate more students, and provide more frequent hands-on instruction. This expanded capability will help produce a larger pool of qualified graduates who are ready to pursue careers in aviation at a time when the industry urgently needs them.

For these reasons, I fully support Elizabeth City State University's initiative to expand and modernize its flight and ATC simulation capabilities. I am confident that this investment will provide substantial benefits not only to the university and its students, but also to the broader aviation community and the safety of the National Airspace System.

Sincerely,



3/5/2026

Benet R. Euler
Air Traffic Manager and Control Tower Supervisor
U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Letter of Support for the Expansion of Flight and Crew Resource Management Simulation
Elizabeth City State University Aviation Science Program

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my continuing support for Elizabeth City State University's initiative to expand its aviation training capabilities through the addition of modern flight simulators and a dedicated Crew Resource Management (CRM) simulation environment as part of its Aviation Science Degree Program.

As a recruiter for the Delta Propel Pilot Career Pathway Program at Delta Air Lines, I have the opportunity to work closely with universities that are developing the next generation of professional pilots. Programs that combine strong academic foundations with advanced simulation training in parallel to their active flight training are essential in preparing students for the operational realities of modern airline aviation.

One of the most critical competencies for today's professional pilots is effective Crew Resource Management. CRM encompasses the communication, leadership, decision-making, and workload management skills that allow flight crews to operate safely and efficiently in complex environments. While traditional flight simulators provide an excellent platform for developing aircraft handling skills and procedural knowledge, a dedicated CRM simulation environment offers students the opportunity to practice the interpersonal and operational coordination skills that are fundamental to airline operations.

The addition of a CRM-focused simulator at Elizabeth City State University would allow students to train in multi-crew scenarios that mirror real airline cockpit environments. Students can learn to manage high workload situations, coordinate responsibilities between pilot flying and pilot monitoring, communicate effectively under pressure, and apply structured decision-making processes when faced with abnormal or unexpected events. These experiences are extremely valuable in preparing students for the collaborative environment they will encounter in airline training programs and flight deck operations.

Modern, FAA-compliant flight simulators paired with CRM training platforms also allow students to practice integrated operational scenarios that combine technical flying skills with crew coordination and risk management. This integrated approach reflects the training philosophy used by airlines today and helps students transition more smoothly into professional pilot training programs.

The aviation industry continues to experience strong long-term demand for well-trained pilots who possess both technical proficiency and strong crew coordination skills. Universities that invest in modern simulation infrastructure are helping ensure that

graduates enter the aviation workforce prepared to meet the safety and operational standards expected by major airlines.

Elizabeth City State University has demonstrated a commitment to developing highly capable aviation professionals. Expanding its simulation capabilities particularly through the addition of a dedicated Crew Resource Management simulator will further strengthen the program and better prepare its graduates for airline career pathways such as Delta's Propel Program.

For these reasons, I strongly support Elizabeth City State University's efforts to enhance its simulation training resources. Investments in advanced flight and CRM simulation technology will provide significant benefits to students, aviation partners, and the broader aviation industry.

Sincerely,

Captain Justin Mutawassim

Delta Air Lines

Pilot Recruiter

Delta Propel Program Liaison



1028 Consolidated Road
Elizabeth City, North Carolina 27909

March 6, 2026

**Letter of Support for Enhanced ATC and Flight Simulation Capacity
Elizabeth City State University Aviation Science Program**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to offer my strong support for Elizabeth City State University's initiative to expand and modernize its flight and Air Traffic Control (ATC) training simulators in support of the university's Aviation Science Degree Program and its Enhanced Air Traffic-Collegiate Training Initiative (AT-CTI) curriculum. As the Airport Manager for the Elizabeth City Regional Airport in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, I recognize the critical role that high-quality training plays in ensuring safe and efficient aviation operations throughout our region and the broader National Airspace System.

General aviation airports such as Elizabeth City Regional Airport rely heavily on well-trained pilots who understand safe flight operations, sound decision-making, and proper procedures within complex and evolving airspace environments. As aviation activity continues to grow across the region, the need for highly prepared pilots entering the aviation workforce has become increasingly important.

Elizabeth City State University has long served as a valuable partner in developing the next generation of aviation professionals. The university's aviation program provides students with a strong academic foundation while also emphasizing practical training that prepares graduates for real-world aviation environments. Expanding access to modern, FAA-compliant flight simulators will significantly strengthen the university's ability to provide that practical experience.

Advanced flight simulators that meet Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) standards provide students with a safe and controlled environment in which to practice essential flight procedures, instrument operations, and emergency scenarios. These systems allow students to train in situations that would be difficult, costly, or potentially unsafe to replicate in an aircraft. Through simulation, students can repeatedly practice critical skills such as instrument approaches, weather-related decision-making, airspace navigation, and abnormal or emergency procedures.

From an airport operations perspective, the benefits of simulator-based training directly translate into safer flight operations. Pilots who have developed strong procedural knowledge and situational awareness through simulation arrive at airports better prepared to operate within busy traffic patterns, communicate effectively with air traffic control, and manage challenging weather or airspace conditions.

Additionally, increasing the number of available simulators will allow Elizabeth City State University to provide more students with consistent access to hands-on training. Greater simulator availability supports higher training repetition, improved skill development, and stronger confidence among student pilots before they enter live flight operations.

The expansion of modern flight and ATC simulators is an important step in maintaining the program's effectiveness and alignment with FAA training standards. Modern simulation technology allows students to experience realistic flight, tower, radar, and airport operations in a controlled learning environment. These systems enable instructors to replicate complex traffic scenarios, varying weather conditions, and operational challenges that mirror real-world situations faced by controllers and pilots.

For the Enhanced AT-CTI program in particular, access to advanced, FAA-aligned ATC simulation platforms is essential. Updated simulators that meet current FAA requirements provide students with opportunities to practice phraseology, sequencing, separation standards, and workload management before entering professional training environments. This hands-on experience significantly improves student preparedness and enhances the transition from academic instruction to operational training within the FAA or other aviation organizations.

For these reasons, I strongly support Elizabeth City State University's efforts to expand its FAA-compliant flight simulation resources. Investments in modern simulation technology will enhance student training, strengthen aviation safety, and help ensure that the next generation of pilots entering our regional and national airspace system is thoroughly prepared.

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Scott Hinton

Airport Director

Elizabeth City Regional Airport

**Letter of Support for Expansion of Flight Simulation Training
Elizabeth City State University Aviation Science Program**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to offer my strong support for Elizabeth City State University's initiative to expand and modernize its flight simulation capabilities in support of the Aviation Science Degree Program. As the Airport Director for Currituck County Regional Airport in Currituck, North Carolina, I recognize the critical role that high-quality training plays in ensuring safe and efficient aviation operations throughout our region and the broader National Airspace System.

General aviation airports such as Currituck County Regional Airport rely heavily on well-trained pilots who understand safe flight operations, sound decision-making, and proper procedures within complex and evolving airspace environments. As aviation activity continues to grow across the region, the need for highly prepared pilots entering the aviation workforce has become increasingly important.

Elizabeth City State University has long served as a valuable partner in developing the next generation of aviation professionals. The university's aviation program provides students with a strong academic foundation while also emphasizing practical training that prepares graduates for real-world aviation environments. Expanding access to modern, FAA-compliant flight simulators will significantly strengthen the university's ability to provide that practical experience.

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For these reasons, I strongly support Elizabeth City State University's efforts to expand its FAA-compliant flight simulation resources. Investments in modern simulation technology will enhance student training, strengthen aviation safety, and help ensure that the next generation of pilots entering our regional and national airspace system is thoroughly prepared.

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,



William Nelson
Currituck County
Airport Director
252-273-3242

William.Nelson@CurrituckCountync.gov



**Letter of Support for Expansion of Flight Simulation Training
Elizabeth City State University Aviation Science Program**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to offer my strong support for Elizabeth City State University's initiative to expand and modernize its flight simulation capabilities in support of the Aviation Science Degree Program. As the Airport Director for Statesville Regional Airport in Stateville, North Carolina, I recognize the critical role that high-quality training plays in ensuring safe and efficient aviation operations throughout our region and the broader National Airspace System.

General aviation airports such as Statesville Regional Airport rely heavily on well-trained pilots who understand safe flight operations, sound decision-making, and proper procedures within complex and evolving airspace environments. As aviation activity continues to grow across the region, the need for highly prepared pilots entering the aviation workforce has become increasingly important.

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Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is followed by a long horizontal line that extends to the right.

John Ferguson, A.A.E., NCAP
Airport Director
Statesville Regional Airport
Statesville, North Carolina