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## **Helicopter Association International Participates in Utah Aviation Workforce Development Roundtable**

*Alexandria, Va. (August 31, 2022)* – As part of an ongoing program to address the shortage of helicopter pilots and maintenance professionals, Helicopter Association International (HAI) participated in an Aviation Workforce Development Roundtable in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The event, organized by US Representative Burgess Owens (R-UT-4), discussed ways to build on the success of the Utah Rotor Pathway Program (URPP), an HAI initiative that has received two national awards since its inception in 2019. The roundtable consisting of helicopter operators, educators, and government stakeholders, worked to identify federal resources available to support aviation workforce efforts. The roundtable took place at the Office of Aeronautics Division of the Utah Department of Transportation.

"Utahns have a bright future because we come to the table prepared to tackle our unique challenges," said Rep. Owens. "I enjoyed sitting down with statewide aviation experts to address the workforce shortages affecting this critical industry and ways we can continue to benefit from successful resources like the Utah Rotor Pathway Program, Choose Aerospace, Women in Aviation International, and the FAA Reauthorization."

"HAI applauds Representative Owens for his leadership in organizing this event," says Cade Clark, Vice President of Government Affairs for HAI. "We are deeply grateful for his efforts to address the continuing shortages of pilots and maintenance personnel in Utah and across the nation."

Utah was first in the nation with its Rotor Pathway Program, designed to introduce rotorcraft aviation as a career to students at a young age and make more advanced courses available as the student progresses. HAI has met with stakeholders in multiple states that have expressed a sincere interest in setting up pathway programs similar to the URPP. "Helping to find, or establish, federal resources for pathway programs would open doors for similar partnerships across the country. It helps the rotorcraft industry reach the next generation of pilots and maintenance technicians while still in high school."

The program brings together industry, universities, and high schools to provide helicopter pilot and maintenance training at the high school level. The students earn college credits while still in high school and are offered mentoring, internship, and job interviews upon completing the college-level aviation program. The URPP has expanded to 32 high schools in the state, and the number of industry partners also continues to grow.

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*HAI is the professional trade association for the international helicopter industry and represents more than 1,100 companies and over 16,000 industry professionals in more than 65 countries. Each year, HAI members safely operate more than 3,700 helicopters and remotely piloted aircraft approximately 2.9 million hours. HAI is dedicated to the promotion of the helicopter as a safe, effective method of commerce and to the advancement of the international helicopter community.*