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District 74

H.B. No. 477- Sponsor Testimony

House Aerospace and Aviation Committee

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Chairman Holmes, Ranking Member Baker, and Members of the House Aviation and Aerospace Committee: thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. 477. This legislation will aim to incorporate seaplane bases, heliports, vertiports, and spaceports into the Aeronautics Law.

In recent years, Ohio has embarked on an ambitious journey, positioning ourselves as a trailblazer in the realm of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) technology. Our commitment to innovation and progress has propelled us to the forefront of this advanced industry.

Springfield-Beckley Airport and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base serve as the epicenter of Ohio’s vast AAM initiatives, serving as testbeds for groundbreaking technologies that will shape the future of aviation. As seen with the establishment of the National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence (NAAMCE) at Springfield-Beckley Airport which stands as a proof to Ohio’s dedication to advancing AAM capabilities and driving technological innovation forward. Additionally, the recent announcement of JOBY’s new manufacturing facility at Dayton International Airport underscores Ohio’s attractiveness as a hub for AAM production and development.

However, as we embrace the dawn of a new era in aviation, we recognize the imperative need for legislation that will facilitate and support the growth of AAM operations within our state. With each stride in technological advancement comes the necessity for regulatory frameworks that ensure safety, efficiency, and responsible development.

The proposed legislation before this committee aims to achieve several critical objectives:

Firstly, it seeks to establish clear definitions of key terms such as “heliports,” “vertiports,” and “spaceports,” integrating these definitions seamlessly into Ohio’s Aeronautics Law. By doing so, we provide clarity and coherence to the regulatory landscape, creating an environment favorable to the growth of AAM infrastructure.

Secondly, the legislation mandates that any seaplane base, heliport, vertiport, or spaceport intended for commercial use must obtain a certificate of approval from the Department of Transportation (ODOT). This requirement ensures that all AAM facilities meet rigorous standards of safety and operational integrity before being utilized for commercial purposes.

Finally, this legislation applies consistent processes and requirements, similar to those imposed on commercial airports, to all AAM facilities seeking ODOT certification. This uniform approach guarantees equitable treatment and adherence to established regulatory norms across the board.

In conclusion, this legislation represents a pivotal step forward in Ohio's journey to become a national and international leader in the AAM industry. By creating an environment of innovation, safety, and regulatory clarity, we pave the way for the continued growth and success of Ohio's AAM initiatives.

Pending any further questions, this concludes my testimony for House Bill 477. Thank you for the opportunity to speak and I would be happy to take any questions.