To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pilot program to provide grants related to advanced air mobility infrastructure, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. LARSEN of Washington introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _________________

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Transportation to establish a pilot program to provide grants related to advanced air mobility infrastructure, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “Advanced Aviation Infrastructure Modernization Act” or the “AAIM Act”.

5
SEC. 2. ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a pilot program to provide grants that—

(1) assist an eligible entity to plan for the development and deployment of infrastructure necessary to facilitate AAM operations in the United States; and

(2) make funding available for costs directly related to construction of public-use vertiports or associated infrastructure.

(b) PLANNING GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide grants to eligible entities to develop comprehensive plans under paragraph (2) related to AAM infrastructure.

(2) COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after receiving a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretary a comprehensive plan in a format that may be published on the website of the Department of Transportation.

(B) PLAN CONTENTS.—The Secretary shall establish content requirements for com-
prehensive plans submitted under this sub-
section, which may include the following:

(i) The identification of planned or
potential public-use or private-use vertiport
locations.

(ii) A description of infrastructure
necessary to support AAM operations.

(iii) A description of types of planned
or potential AAM operations.

(iv) The identification of physical and
digital infrastructure required to meet the
standards for vertiport design and per-
formance characteristics established by the
Federal Aviation Administration (as in ef-
fect on the date on which the Secretary
issues a grant to an eligible entity), includ-
ing modifications to existing infrastructure
and ground sensors, electric charging and
other fueling requirements, electric utility
requirements, wireless and cybersecurity
requirements, and other necessary hard-
ware or software.

(v) A description of potential environ-
mental effects of planned construction or
siting of public-use vertiports, including ef-
forts to reduce the adverse effects of potential aviation noise.

(vi) A description of how planned public-use or private-use vertiport locations, including new or repurposed infrastructure, fit into existing State and local transportation systems and networks, including—

(I) connectivity to existing public transportation hubs and intermodal and multimodal facilities; and

(II) opportunities to create new service to areas underserved by air transportation, without compromising safety and efficiency of other facilities and airspace users.

(vii) A description of how public-use vertiport planning will be incorporated in State or metropolitan planning documents.

(viii) The identification of the process an eligible entity will undertake to ensure an adequate level of community engagement for planned public-use vertiport locations and planned or anticipated AAM operations, including engagement with under-
served communities, individuals with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minorities, to address equity of access and other priorities.

(ix) The identification of the actions necessary for an eligible entity to undertake the construction of public-use vertiports, such as planning studies to assess existing infrastructure, environmental studies, studies of projected economic benefit to the community, lease or acquisition of an easement or land for new infrastructure, and activities related to other capital costs.

(x) The identification of State, local, or private sources of funding an eligible entity may use to assist with the construction or operation of a public-use vertiport.

(3) APPLICATION.—To apply for a grant under this subsection, an eligible entity shall provide to the Secretary an application in such form, at such time, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

(4) SELECTION.—
(A) In general.—In awarding grants under this subsection, the Secretary shall consider the following:

(i) Geographic diversity.

(ii) The need for comprehensive plans that—

(I) facilitate the safe integration of AAM operations into the National Airspace System;

(II) improve transportation safety, connectivity, access, and equity in both rural and urban regions in the United States;

(III) leverage existing public transportation systems and intermodal and multimodal facilities;

(IV) reduce surface congestion and the environmental impacts of transportation;

(V) grow the economy and create jobs in the United States; and

(VI) encourage community engagement when planning for AAM related infrastructure.
(B) PRIORITY.—The Secretary shall prioritize awarding grants under this subsection to eligible entities that partner with commercial AAM entities, institutions of higher education, research institutions, or other relevant stakeholders to develop and prepare a comprehensive plan.

(5) GRANT AMOUNT.—Each grant made under this subsection shall be made in an amount that is not more than $1,000,000.

(6) BRIEFING.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the first comprehensive plan is submitted under paragraph (2), and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary shall provide a briefing to the appropriate committees of Congress on the comprehensive plans submitted to the Secretary under such paragraph.

(B) CONTENTS.—The briefing required under subparagraph (A) shall include—

(i) an evaluation of all planned or proposed public-use vertiport locations included in the comprehensive plans submitted under paragraph (2) and how such planned or proposed public-use vertiport
locations may fit into the overall United States transportation system and network; and

(ii) a description of lessons or best practices learned through the review of comprehensive plans and how the Secretary will incorporate any such lessons or best practices into Federal standards or guidance for the design and operation of AAM infrastructure and facilities.

(c) Construction Grants.—

(1) In General.—The Secretary may award grants to covered recipients to carry out construction activities described under paragraph (2).

(2) Eligible Uses.—A covered recipient may use grant funds awarded under this subsection for design, bidding, and environmental study activities, and other capital costs, as the Secretary determines appropriate, directly related to the construction of a public-use vertiport or associated infrastructure pursuant to the comprehensive plan submitted by such covered recipient.

(3) Requirements.—The requirements of subsections (b) and (c) of section 47112 of title 49, United States Code, and subsections (a) and (b) of
section 50101 of such title, shall apply to a grant awarded under this subsection.

(4) LIMITATION.—The Secretary may not award a grant under this subsection—

(A) for the acquisition, conversion, or retrofitting of AAM aircraft; or

(B) for the construction of private-use vertiports or associated infrastructure.

(5) GRANT TIMING.—The Secretary may not issue a grant under this subsection until—

(A) the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration has—

(i) certified 2 or more models of aircraft designed to provide AAM transportation under part 23, 25, 27, or 29 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; and

(ii) published an advisory circular containing appropriate standards for vertiport design and performance characteristics; and

(B) the Secretary has—

(i) determined that 2 or more AAM operators hold certificates under part 119 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, for such operators to perform air carrier
operations covered under part 135 of such
title; and

(ii) issued, to 2 or more air carriers
formed to provide AAM transportation,
certificates under chapter 411 of title 49,
United States Code.

(d) **Authorization of Appropriations.**—

(1) **Authorization.**—There are authorized to
be appropriated to the Secretary to carry out this
section $12,500,000 for each of fiscal years 2022
and 2023, to remain available until expended.

(2) **Administrative Expenses.**—Of the
amounts made available under paragraph (1), the
Secretary may retain up to 1 percent for personnel,
contracting, and other costs to establish and admin-
ister the pilot program under this section.

(e) **Termination.**—

(1) **In General.**—No grant may be awarded
under this section after September 30, 2023.

(2) **Continued Funding.**— Funds authorized
to be appropriated pursuant to subsection (d) may
be expended after September 30, 2023—

(A) for grants awarded prior to September
30, 2023; and

(B) for administrative expenses.
(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY; AAM.—The terms “advanced air mobility” and “AAM” mean an air transportation system that transports individuals and property between points in the United States using aircraft, such as remotely piloted, autonomous, or vertical take-off and landing aircraft, including those powered by electric or hybrid driven propulsion, in both controlled and uncontrolled airspace.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

(3) COMMERCIAL AAM ENTITIES.—The term “commercial AAM entities” means—

(A) manufacturers of aircraft, avionics, propulsion systems, and air traffic management systems related to AAM; and

(B) intended commercial operators of AAM aircraft and systems.

(4) COVERED RECIPIENT.—The term “covered recipient” means the recipient of a grant under sub-
section (b) who has submitted a comprehensive plan—

(A) that has been reviewed by the Secretary pursuant to subsection (b); and

(B) that the Secretary has determined contains proposed projects that comply with the standards for vertiport design and performance characteristics described in a published advisory circular.

(5) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a State, local, or Tribal government, including a political subdivision thereof;

(B) an airport sponsor;

(C) a transit agency;

(D) a port authority;

(E) a metropolitan planning organization;

or

(F) any combination or consortium of the entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(6) METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION.—The term “metropolitan planning organization” has the meaning given such term in section 5303(b) of title 49, United States Code.
(7) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Transportation.

(8) PUBLIC-USE VERTIPORT.—The term “public-use vertiport” means a designated location used or intended to be used for public purposes and to support AAM operations, including the landing, takeoff, loading, taxiing, parking, and storage of vertical take-off and landing aircraft.

(9) STATE.—The term “State” means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

(10) VERTICAL TAKE-OFF AND LANDING AIRCRAFT.—The term “vertical take-off and landing aircraft” means an aircraft with lift/thrust units used to generate powered lift and control and with 2 or more lift/thrust units used to provide lift during vertical take-off or landing.

SEC. 3. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.

Nothing in this Act may be construed as conferring upon any person, State, local, or Tribal government the authority to determine the safety of any AAM operation or the feasibility of simultaneous operations by AAM and conventional aircraft within any given area of the National Airspace System.