

October 28, 2021

State Representative Michael J. Grant, District #75
Chairman, Charlotte County Legislative Delegation
4355 Pinnacle Street, Suite C
Charlotte Harbor, FL 33980

Dear Honorable Michael J. Grant:

I am writing to request your support of the Charlotte County Airport Authority's (CCAA) \$3 million Appropriations request for a new combined hangar and classroom facility for Charlotte Technical College's (CTC) FAA-certified Aviation Maintenance Technician School.

U.S. aviation industry is facing a technical worker shortage that threatens to undermine the growth and competitiveness of one of the most important sectors of our economy. The aviation industry is necessary for mobility of people and goods, and for the safety of civil aviation aircraft.

As a tenant, former airline pilot and avid general aviation pilot located at Punta Gorda Airport, I understand that robust workforce training in aircraft maintenance is essential to the future of aviation. **Qualified aircraft mechanics are in short supply which is hampering the maintenance and safety of hundreds of aircraft on a daily basis. KPGD could be an important solution to this very serious problem. The expansion of an A&P training program would not only create jobs it would contribute to the expansion of our local economy.**

We are extremely thankful for the past support of the Florida Legislature and the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for providing funding which enabled CTC to launch its program with strong enrollment in August 2021. However, a larger facility is necessary to meet the aviation industry demand for aircraft mechanics and CTC's growing student enrollment. State funding is essential to keep CTC's costs low enough for tuition to remain affordable for students.

This project is key to the future of Charlotte County by further diversifying economic development opportunities in the region, creating new and high-quality job candidates, and supporting a burgeoning aviation industry in Florida.

Thank you in advance for your strong support of job growth and aviation-related training in the region, and for your advocacy of this \$3 million Appropriations Request in the upcoming session.

Sincerely,

Daniel Caldwell