



**Office of Innovative Education & Partnerships
Florida Gulf Coast University
10501 FGCU Blvd. S.
Ft. Myers, FL 33965-6565**

November 2, 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.

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, CTC's growing student enrollment, and its DEO requirement of 750 completers in 10 years (2018-19 Grant). State funding is essential to keep CTC's costs low enough for tuition to remain affordable for students.

With \$3 million in State Appropriations, CCAA will construct the CTC facility and enter into a long-term lease with County Public Schools (CCPS) whereby CCPS will occupy and maintain the facility at the land-lease rate.

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,

Robert C. Peterson

Robert C. Peterson, Ph.D.
New Business Development Manager
Florida Gulf Coast University