

Karen Alstrup
1 Niederwerfer Road
Broad Brook, CT 06016
C: 203-528-6362
karen.alstrup@yahoo.com

July 12, 2016

I realize that you are viewing the CT Aero Tech School's adult aviation maintenance education program as one that should be cut due to economic and social restraints that the state is facing, but I'm here to tell you that not only are you wrong, but you are doing more harm and causing danger to the people of the state as well as the aviation industry as a whole. By closing down this school, you are essentially choosing to endanger the lives of those that fly into and out of this state (for starters) as well as lessen the quality of the aviation mechanics that work in the field.

First, let me touch on the type of school you are considering closing. Solely while I have been in school as a student and for the past 2 years volunteering, students have come from as far as Westfield, MA; Worcester, MA; New London, CT; and New Haven, CT. Students are traveling more than most people do for work every day to learn at this particular school because of its long-standing success and the quality of students it produces. Students that graduate out of this program have gone on to very successful careers, have acquired scholarships for additional training straight out of school instead of waiting until they build up years of experience, and are better prepared than any students from the surrounding schools in the entire Northeast sector. Please feel free to question our FAA DMEs (the examiners who test a student's proficiency once they complete aviation mechanic school and are the ones that sign off stating we can enter the work force as an aviation mechanic) about CT Aero Tech students versus any other schools.

I have heard it personally from several students that attended NAA in the Boston area that their program doesn't even touch the level of proficiency, experience, or quality that CT Aero Tech does. There have even been a few NAA students that have left the program only to start from scratch with ours and state they learned nothing in comparison at NAA and were glad they switched programs. Previous aviation mechanics that went to other schools tell their friends and family not to go to their school, but rather to ours because they've worked with our graduates and state they are second to none. If considering nothing else but this, how can you possibly think closing this type of highly specialized training program could ever be a good idea when the others all around here are sub-par at best?

Secondly, going off of my previous comments, now that you are taking away future students of the highest caliber, you're also taking away future employees that will keep costs down while being productive, doing the job right the first time, and will not skimp on quality which only helps everyone in the aviation industry and anyone that uses this industry. What if someone rushed a wiring job, a computer upgrade, connecting an engine component, or sheet metal repair? Or rather lets have a comparison. One, you take your car to have some maintenance done and they forget to connect a few things properly. Your car starts to make some noises, warning lights go off and you drive safely back and have them fix it; mad but safe. Two, the aircraft your family is going on a trip in goes in for maintenance and they forget to connect a few things properly. You are at cruising altitude and all hell breaks loose and you're going down and get seriously injured, potentially worse. Which instance would you want to **ensure** a quality education? Which type are you preventing from doing so?

Third, you talk about funding, which is a very silly point to me as with all the issues going on currently, our school should be the last of your concerns. I can sum it up with two instances – the Yard Goats Stadium and UConn. I think you have bigger fish to fry with people not using funds appropriately; however, to take away funds from a school that stays in or very close to budget seems, well idiotic. People throughout the aviation industry believe in our school; donate aircraft, engines, and equipment to our school; and assist the students in every way afforded to promote the students from this school. Is that happening for any other trades schools, or schools in general that you're aware of?

I myself have donated my time over the past two years since graduating to improve the teaching material on behalf of the teachers to afford the students a better learning platform and to save time (for both students and teachers) and money (by saving supplies). I have also developed a grading platform to assist the teacher providing better efficiency and time management. How many students do you know believe so much in their school that they go back and re-write about 600 pages of instructions, correct faded pictures, remake some pictures and diagrams to make them clearer, and write a grading program because they believe fully in what the school stands for? I can almost guarantee you don't know a single person!

Fourth, the amount of training that goes into an aviation mechanic is more than double the highest trained pilot's education. In order to be an airline pilot, either for charter, commercial flights, or what have you, need a minimum of 1,000 hours and can take a position as a pilot for a company at which point the person has been flying a substantial amount of time as to first fly on your own, all you need is 40 hours to get your private pilot's certificate. That's just 40 hours and you can FLY an aircraft on your own or rent an aircraft. However, in order to work on an aircraft as a mechanic you need minimum of **2,400 hours!** Sixty times more than you need to fly on your own, two and a half times more than you need to fly a commercial jet. Knowing that the person that flies any aircraft requires that much less time and training that a person needed to fix it, it has to show you the type of person that wants to be an aviation mechanic. As students, we realize the vast amount of education and training that **MUST** go into becoming a good mechanic and we take it head on. You are now preventing people from not only reaching a dream of working in aviation, but preventing highly skilled, highly qualified mechanics from coming into being.

Considering all of this, I strongly advise you reconsider your stance on CT Aero Tech School and allow it to continue teaching and producing the highest quality and caliber students for the entire northeast sector. Think about what you spend you allocated money on and what could be better budgeted in order to allow this school to operate. IF you decide that this school is not worth it to you, I strongly advise you to look at the devastating consequences it will have on the large aviation companies that provide you with substantial taxes and economic sustainability and watch them dwindle down and leave due to lack of qualified workers or a lack of faith in the state government to promote and protect their industry. How will you deal with that budget cut?

I hope you realize how devastating your decision to close this school is and immediately reverse it!

Thank you for your time.

Warmest regards,
Karen Alstrup
8-year Army Service Connected Disabled Vet
A&P Mechanic, CT Aero Tech Graduate 2014
Rotorcraft Pilot