



National Lieutenant Governors Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 1, 2025

CONTACT: Kellie Rittershausen, NLGA Executive Director, 859-283-1400, kritters@nlga.us

NATIONAL LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION (NLGA) LAUNCHES “STATE STRATEGIES COMMITTEE ON AEROSPACE”

The NLGA Aerospace Committee, bipartisanly comprised of lieutenant governors and their appointees, will provide national leadership on aerospace, aviation, and defense policy in the states and territories

AUGUST 1, 2025 - The National Lieutenant Governors Association (NLGA) has launched the *NLGA State Strategies Committee on Aerospace*, a national body to advance aerospace, aviation, and defense policy in the states and territories.

The Aerospace Committee was created and appointed by the NLGA Executive Committee at the 2025 meetings of NLGA. Members of NLGA are the lieutenant governors and seconds-in-command in the 55 U.S. states and territories. NLGA Members serve important roles in the executive and legislative branches, and help steer state/territorial government through their constitutional and statutory duties, as well as through personal initiatives and governors' assignments. Several lieutenant governors serve in leadership roles shaping policies that impact the aerospace, aviation, and defense industries.

The aerospace and defense industry supports communities in all 50 states, employing more than 2.2 million people across the country and bringing in almost \$19 billion in state and local tax receipts (*Aerospace Industries Association, 2023*). Aerospace, aviation, and defense are rapidly evolving industries that present dynamic challenges and opportunities that can benefit from strong state-to-state collaboration. States and territories are instrumental in advancing aerospace by shaping policy, enacting legislation, and fostering partnerships across key areas such as workforce development, economic growth, supply chain resilience, manufacturing and production, defense communities, research and innovation, regulatory frameworks, and more.

“As leaders in state and territorial government, lieutenant governors are uniquely positioned to advance efforts in aerospace, aviation, and defense policy,” said **Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, NLGA Chair 2024-2025**. “And as the national association for seconds-in-command, the NLGA-led Aerospace Committee will provide bipartisan, national leadership, facilitate collaboration, and positively impact aerospace policy nationwide.”

Members of the Aerospace Committee will include lieutenant governors and their public and government sector appointee(s), up to two appointees per state/territory. The Committee will be led by the six lieutenant governors on the bipartisan Board: Louisiana Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, Alabama Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth, Wisconsin Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez, Utah Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson, Maryland Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, and North Carolina Lt. Governor Rachel Hunt. The Aerospace Committee will hold its first convening October 20-21, 2025, in Salt Lake City, Utah, hosted by Utah Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson.

“Utah is home to some of the finest military installations in the country, including Hill Air Force Base, as well as numerous aerospace, defense, and cyber companies, and several prestigious research institutions – all working with our government leaders to make Utah an international leader in these spaces,” said **Utah Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson**. “I’m proud Utah could host the inaugural convening of the NLGA Aerospace Committee, and look forward to showcasing how the successes here can inform the policy dialogue in other states and territories.”

NLGA is the nonpartisan, nonprofit, professional association for the lieutenant governors and officials second-in-line to governors in the 55 states and territories. More information on the *NLGA State Strategies Committee on Aerospace* is available at: <https://nlga.us/strategies/nlga-aerospace-committee>.

Quotes from NLGA leadership and lieutenant governors on the NLGA Aerospace Committee:

“The aerospace sector is a major pillar of South Carolina’s economy, where we are home to one of the nation’s most dynamic aerospace centers and a highly-skilled workforce that excels in advanced manufacturing and innovation,” said **South Carolina Lt. Governor Pamela Evette, NLGA Chair 2025-2026**. “I look forward to serving as 2025-2026 NLGA Chair for the inaugural year of the NLGA Aerospace Committee, bringing together engaged state leaders from across the country for bipartisan collaboration.”

“Kentucky ranks #3 in the country in total aerospace exports, and Kentucky is the only state in the country with two cargo freight airports that rank in the top 10 (Louisville International and Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International),” said **Kentucky Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman, NLGA Chair-Elect 2025-2026**. “The projected growth in Kentucky’s aerospace and aviation industries present unique challenges and opportunities in growing a skilled workforce, and I look forward to the NLGA Aerospace Committee dialogue on education and career training opportunities to support an aerospace workforce.”

“Nevada has a long history as a leader in research, design, and development of technologies for defense, and we are home to Nellis Air Force Base, Creech Air Force Base, Naval Air Station Fallon and the Hawthorne Army Depot, as well as several commercial aerospace companies and research entities,” said **Nevada Lt. Governor Stavros Anthony, NLGA Treasurer 2025-2026**. “I look forward to the opportunity to share Nevada’s aerospace and defense perspective with my peer lieutenant governors.”

“As the birthplace of aviation and the #1 largest manufacturing workforce in the southeast U.S., North Carolina continues to innovate and support the aerospace industry to reach new frontiers,” said **North Carolina Lt. Governor Rachel Hunt**. “North Carolina is home to unique assets in aviation, manufacturing, defense, research and innovation, and aerospace, and I look forward to bringing that perspective to the NLGA Aerospace Committee.”

"The NLGA Aerospace Committee is an opportunity for state leaders in aerospace, aviation, and defense to come together to collaborate on best practices and innovations," said **Louisiana Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, Aerospace Committee Board**. "I look forward to bringing the Louisiana perspective to the Committee, sharing our state's success in advancing U.S. aerospace and defense capabilities, supporting high-growth aviation companies and defense contractors, and offering the infrastructure and workforce that these industries demand."

"Wisconsin is a national leader in advanced manufacturing, supported by many world-class research institutions and a highly skilled workforce that drives aerospace and aviation innovation at both the state and national levels," said **Wisconsin Lt. Governor Sara Rodriguez, Aerospace Committee Board**. "With cutting-edge research and development, our state's pivotal role in the aerospace and aviation supply chain provides a valuable perspective that I look forward to sharing with the NLGA Aerospace Committee."

"Alabama built the rockets that sent men to the moon, and with hundreds of companies from the Tennessee line to the Gulf of Mexico, we remain the aerospace and defense capital of the world today," said **Alabama Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth, Aerospace Committee Board**. "By combining Alabama's unique perspective and experience in the aerospace sector with those from other states, we can grow the industry, keep it healthy, and ensure that the United States continues to be the most powerful and advanced nation that history has ever known."

"Maryland is a leader in the aerospace industry, with a dense concentration of aerospace engineering talent, more than 9,000 aerospace companies, and several mission-critical federal and military agencies impacting aerospace, aviation, and defense," said **Maryland Lt. Governor Aruna Miller, Aerospace Committee Board**. "I look forward to bringing Maryland's expertise and perspective to this national committee, and helping to lead state efforts to impact the advancement of aerospace policy nationally."

###