



## National Lieutenant Governors Association

### **NLGA State Strategies in Economic Recovery**

February 17, 2021

#### **Alabama Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth: Supporting the Aerospace Industry is a Key to Continued Economic Success**

The aerospace industry is a vital part of the Alabama economy – in fact, I like to say that Alabama is the “aerospace capital of the world.”

Our state has a long history of cultivating aviation, space flight, and manufacturing and development in aerospace. Montgomery is home to the Maxwell Air Force Base, Huntsville is home to the Marshall Space Flight Center, and dozens of companies in the industry call Alabama home.

In fact, more than 60,000 jobs within the state rely directly upon the industry and its associated defense components. Additionally, its economic impact is estimated to be in the billions of dollars.

For more than a half-century, Alabama has been a national leader in aerospace development and technology, and if we are going to maintain that role, we must develop a new generation of students, individuals and businesses with the qualifications to work within the industry. At the same time that we provide opportunities for students and small businesses that need them, we will grow Alabama’s economy and create long-lasting, well-paying jobs in an area that is expanding exponentially.

That’s why this month I announced two new initiatives that will open doors for qualified high school students, college students and small businesses interested in working within Alabama’s internationally known aerospace industry.

In partnership with several nonprofits and private sector entities, a new two-week internship program will allow high school and college students from across the state to learn about the various companies, programs, and opportunities within Alabama’s aerospace industry. The unpaid internship is designed to provide students with opportunities to learn about various jobs in aerospace, educate them about the courses to pursue in school in order to get the job they want, and inform them about the skills and abilities that companies are seeking.

We will also provide outreach to small business owners throughout the state who are interested in either starting to work as a supplier or subcontractor in the aerospace industry or expanding their current work in that area. Small businesses will be invited to participate in forums and supplier conferences designed to connect them with industry contacts and guide them in next steps.

Alabama is fortunate to have such a significant aerospace influence within its borders, and with our strong support, the industry can continue to provide high-paying jobs, long-term investment, and positive impact to our state for decades to come.

These new programs are based off successes in other states, and I would encourage my peer lieutenant governors to explore the industries that make your state great, and find out how you can support and expand them!

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