

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2023

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SENATE BILL DRS45145-LG-39

Short Title: Designate May as "Learn to Fly" Month. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Jarvis, Perry, and Johnson (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT DESIGNATING THE MONTH OF MAY AS "LEARN TO FLY" MONTH.

3 Whereas, the year 2023 is the 120th anniversary of the nationally recognized first
4 flight by Wilbur and Orville Wright, which took place on December 17, 1903; and

5 Whereas, the Wright Brothers' historic flight in Kitty Hawk, NC, is recognized as the
6 first flight that resulted in pilots improving their heavier-than-air aircraft, which had a noteworthy
7 effect on modern aviation; and

8 Whereas, the pilot shortage in the United States is predicted to be between
9 8,000-12,000 pilots in 2023; and

10 Whereas, by 2041, it is estimated that 602,000 new pilots and 610,000 technicians
11 will be needed worldwide; and

12 Whereas, major airlines in the United States, such as American Airlines, Delta, and
13 Southwest, cannot source pilots with enough experience; and

14 Whereas, the pilot shortage in the United States is related to several factors, including:

- 15 (1) The "1,500 Hour Rule," which increased the minimum flight time required to
16 become a commercial airline pilot from 250 to 1,500 hours.
17 (2) A record number of captains and first officers retiring over the next 2-5 years,
18 creating an even more significant shortage.
19 (3) Air travel demand recovering from COVID-19 much faster than the rest of the
20 world.
21 (4) Fewer military pilots leaving active duty; and

22 Whereas, years ago, airline pilot applicants were required to have a college degree.
23 Today, the regional airlines hire pilots to become First Officers (co-pilots) without a college
24 degree; and

25 Whereas, a free program, "The AOPA Foundation High School Aviation STEM
26 Curriculum," is the first of its kind, offering students comprehensive four-year aviation study
27 options aligned to Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and FAA
28 Airman Certification Standards (ACS), which could be readily available to all North Carolina
29 high school students enrolled in participating schools/LEAs; and

30 Whereas, North Carolina is home to over 200 leading aerospace manufacturing
31 companies spread across the State; and

32 Whereas, the highest ratio of airline pilot placements comes from graduates of ATP's
33 Airline Career Pilot program, which has locations in North Carolina; and

34 Whereas, North Carolina State University has conferred over 450 aerospace
35 engineering degrees over the past five years; and



1 Whereas, North Carolina's public airports annually contribute \$72 billion to the State's
2 economy, supporting 330,000 jobs that generate \$23 billion in personal income and returning
3 \$3.7 billion in State and local tax revenues; and

4 Whereas, to encourage the citizens of this State to learn more about aviation, the
5 month of May should be designated as "Learn to Fly" Month in the State of North Carolina; Now,
6 therefore,

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** Chapter 103 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new
9 section to read:

10 **"§ 103-17. Learn to Fly Month.**

11 The month of May of each year is designated as "Learn to Fly" Month in North Carolina."

12 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.