Policy Recommendations to Incentivize Private Investment in ATC

Ty Garrison

ASTM International | WISE Program

July 30th, 2026

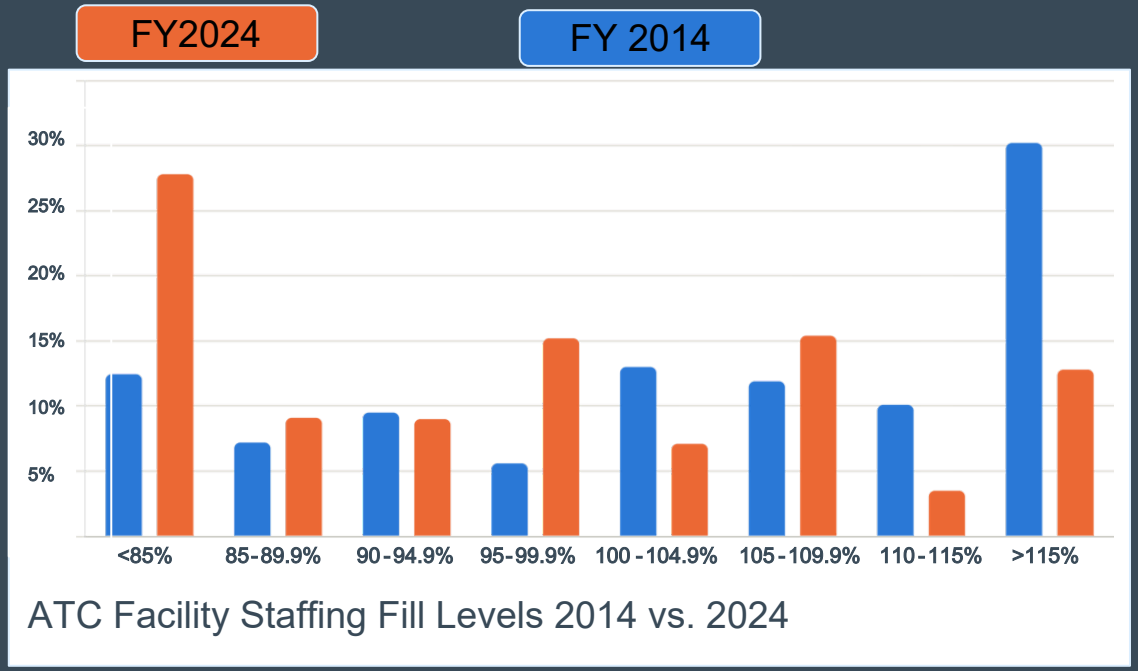
ILLINOIS TECH
ILLINOIS TECH

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

WISE
WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING

Air Traffic Controller Shortage

- 30 Year Staffing Low
- 3,800 Controllers short of staffing models
- Recent accidents at DCA and LaGuardia
- FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 and Air Traffic Control Workforce Development Act of 2025



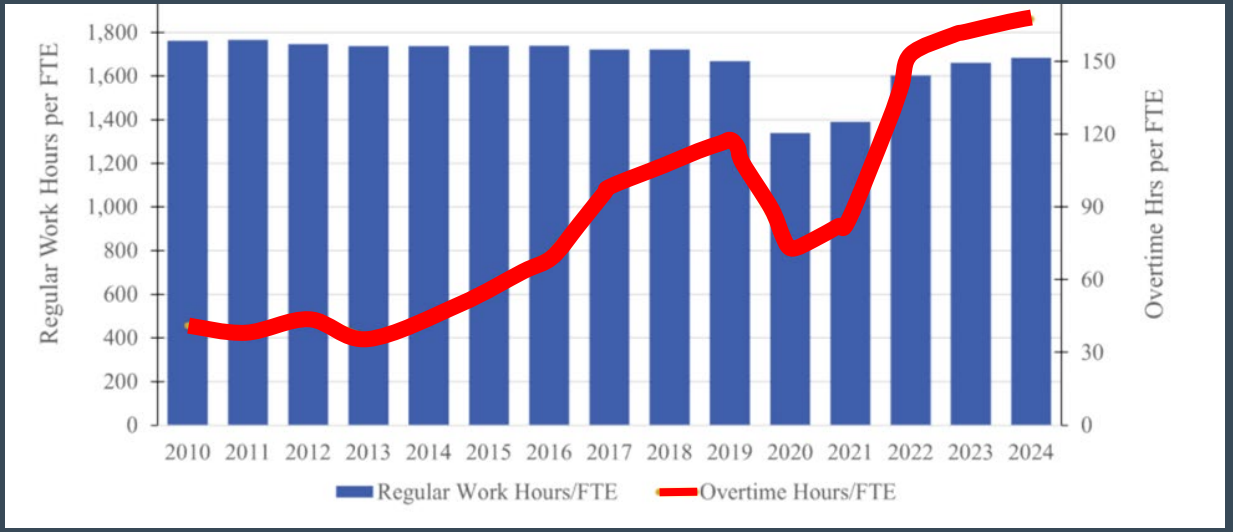
ATC Facility Staffing Fill Levels 2014 vs. 2024

ILLINOIS TECH

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

WISE WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING

Air Traffic Controller Shortage



- 308% Increase in overtime hours per FTE
- Costs Airlines $135-$165 Million in FY 2024 alone
- System traffic is projected to increase by 2.6% per year
- 2-2-1 Schedule Implemented to deal with overtime demand
- Single FAA Academy Bottleneck

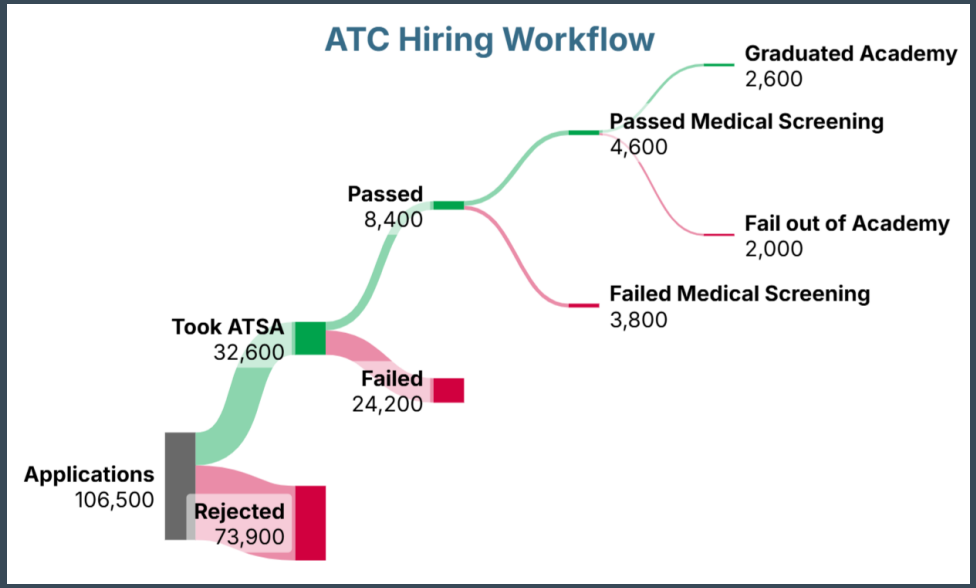
ILLINOIS TECH
ILLINOIS TECH

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

WISE
WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING

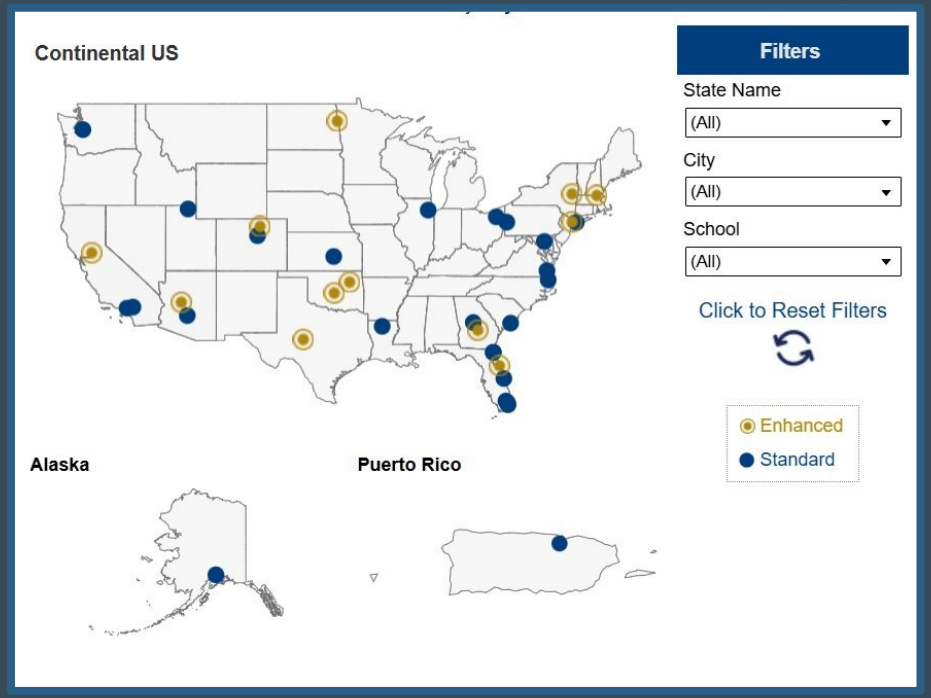
FAA Academy Overview

- Only academy located in Oklahoma City
- Most faculty at the academy are retired ATC controllers
- Only 2.4 percent of applicants make it through the process



AT-CTI Program

- Enhanced Programs allow graduates to completely skip FAA Academy Training
- Alleviates stress on Academy bottleneck
- Non-funded leaves the college responsible to pay for high fidelity simulators and faculty



WISE WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

ILLINOIS TECH
ILLINOIS TECH

Policy Recommendations

ATC Workforce Development Act of 2025

- Urge Congress to pass and fully fund
- Sets up $20Million/year grant structure for **AT-CTI Programs**
- Does not **appropriate** Funds

Federal/Private Grant Structure

- Fund AT-CTI Programs with **Grant Matching** structure added to ATC Workforce Act
- Precedent set by numerous federal agencies

Added Airline Carrier Certificate Fee

- ACC Required for commercial airlines
- 90 Airlines have one as of April 2026
- Proposed Fee will scale with fleet size

WISE WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

ILLINOIS TECH
ILLINOIS TECH

Policy Recommendations

AT- CTI

- Use funds from the Grant matching structure to purchase high fidelity Simulators and faculty

2nd FAA Academy

- Fees collected from the added ACC fee go to the Airport & Airway Trust Fund
- From the AATF funds can be used to offset costs of a 2nd Academy

Examples of Alternative Funding

01	**US Patent and Trademark Office**	• Funded entirely by fees collected from applications
02	**Highway System**	• Split 80/20 between federal and local governments • Both Federal and Local funds must be in place before construction starts
03	**Securities and Exchange Commision**	• Collects registration and transaction fees from the financial markets

Stakeholder Analysis

FAA

Directly incentivized to improve airspace safety and addressing ATC shortage as a systemic issue

Airlines

ATC shortage induced delays cost $135-$165 million per year and passenger safety concerns affect revenue

National Air Traffic Controllers Association

ATC workers union wants to address the bottleneck, and reduce ATC fatigue

Colleges/ AT-CTI Programs

Funding for AT-CTI programs would see more colleges to adopt programs and improve existing ones

Conclusions

My Final Recommendations are as Follows:

1. Urge Congress to add a grant matching structure to the Air Traffic Control Workforce Development Act that would incentivize private investment
2. FAA levy a scaling fee on the Air Carrier Certificate and use the increased revenue to invest in the AT -CTI program as well as a 2nd FAA Academy

Thank You

Questions?

Ty Garrison
tygarrison2003@gmail.com

ILLINOIS TECH
ILLINOIS TECH

ASTM INTERNATIONAL

WISE WASHINGTON INTERNSHIPS for STUDENTS of ENGINEERING