

Media Advisory – Oct. 15, 2009

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Reardon thanks Gregoire for supporting aerospace efforts

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said Thursday he welcomed Gov. Chris Gregoire's efforts to fund additional aerospace training opportunities.

Gregoire traveled to Everett in the morning to announce Workforce Investment Act funding would be used to support local aerospace training programs at Everett Community College. The Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center, a statewide effort announced in July between Reardon, the Aerospace Futures Alliance (AFA) and Spokane County, will receive \$600,000 of that funding.

"I thank Gov. Gregoire for supporting our efforts and stepping forward to help us maintain our competitive edge when it comes to building commercial airplanes," Reardon said. "We know we make the best commercial airplanes in the world, and we want to protect those thousands of jobs at all costs.

"Today's announcement validates our efforts to create a coordinated statewide aerospace training center and curriculum," Reardon continued. "I knew we could make this a reality, and I'm very pleased to have the governor's support."

The funding announced Thursday specifically will assist Everett Community College's Aviation Maintenance Technology School and the Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center. The training center is working now with industry leaders to create curriculum for cutting-edge technologies as well as to offer opportunities to aerospace providers such as the Boeing Co. and Aviation Technical Services (ATS) for advanced employee training.

"We're getting the industries engaged and they're excited about it," said Linda Lanham, executive director of the AFA. "This is a statewide training center that's determined to meet the needs of the industry."

Specifically, the (AFA) will lease from Snohomish County part of a 30,000-square-foot facility at Paine Field Airport to be operated as a centralized training center that allows for the development of training programs that don't currently exist in Washington state but are needed to remain competitive in today's aerospace industry. A similar center will be located at the Spokane International Airport, bringing the east and west together to create a statewide aerospace training program.

“We’re creating new and needed opportunities for our aerospace workers to keep their skill sets well ahead of our competition,” Reardon said. “This helps our leading businesses such as Boeing remain competitive in today’s global economy.”

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