



# Press Release

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## AHS International Celebrates Major Legislative Wins

**Fairfax, VA** — AHS International – *The Vertical Flight Technical Society* – today announces two major accomplishments in the US federal government’s Fiscal Year 2015 budget: additional funding for the Department of Defense’s next-generation Future Vertical Lift (FVL) innovative, as well as for NASA rotorcraft research. The budget was signed into law yesterday by President Obama.

“These are great victories for America’s rotorcraft industry,” said Mike Hirschberg, Executive Director of AHS International, the leading advocate for advancing helicopters and next generation rotorcraft. “Because of these Congressional additions, our men and women in uniform will have more modern rotorcraft for future conflicts, and the industry as a whole will have safer, more efficient, and quieter helicopters.”

As a result of lobbying efforts by AHS International and the Vertical Lift Consortium, the budget includes an additional \$14M for the Army’s Aviation Advanced Technology funding line – a 16% increase over and above the \$89M requested in the President’s Budget – for efforts supporting FVL. Future Vertical Lift is an ambitious plan to replace all DoD helicopters with next generation rotorcraft over the next 40 years. The FVL initiative itself was born as a result of AHS Congressional advocacy efforts in 2008 that directed the DoD to create an FVL Strategic Plan. The additional funds, championed by Senator Richard C. Shelby (R-AL), will be used to augment science and technology (S&T) efforts currently underway to reduce risk.

The budget also includes \$100M additional for NASA Aeronautics, bringing the budget line up to \$651M. These additional funds were largely the result of efforts by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), the retiring chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee that oversees the NASA budget. The Aeronautics research budget at NASA had been drastically cut over the years. NASA’s budget for rotorcraft research, now called the Revolutionary Vertical Lift Technology (RVLT) project, is funded out of the overall Aeronautics budget and had been reduced to only \$15M – half of its historical level of \$30M or more – in the FY2015 President’s Budget Request. As part of these draconian cuts, the NASA RVLT project had

eliminated a number of initiatives related to reducing accidents, reduce noising, improving fuel efficiency, and increasing competitiveness.

As a result of outreach efforts by AHS and VLC, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies wrote that it was “disappointed in the requested reduction in rotary craft research and encourages NASA to increase funding for this activity”. The final budget approved by Congress included the requirement that NASA apply the additional funds “proportionally across the restructured Aeronautics programs” – meaning that rotary wing research will receive a significant increase.

In addition to Senator Shelby and Congressman Wolf, several other House and Senate members strongly supported these rotorcraft funding increases, including Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Congresswoman Martha Roby (R-AL), Congresswoman Kay Granger (R-TX), Congressman Walter Jones (R-NC), Congressman Bob Brady (D-PA), Congressman Mo Brooks (R-AL), Congressman Ander Crenshaw (R-FL) and Congressman Duncan Hunter (R-CA). AHS and VLC are grateful to the Members of the Army Aviation Caucus for their support.

These legislative successes were the result of AHS International’s leadership, along with support from the Vertical Lift Consortium, a non-profit whose mission is “to work collaboratively with the U.S. Government to develop and transition innovative vertical lift technologies to rapidly and affordably meet warfighter needs.” These outreach efforts by AHS and the VLC educated House and Senate members on the importance of FVL and NASA rotorcraft research. With a groundswell of Congressional support for more capable and safer aircraft, AHS and VLC hope to build upon these legislative achievements for the FY2016 budget, ensuring that Future Vertical Lift and NASA’s Revolutionary Vertical Lift Technology research are adequately funded in the future. To find out more about AHS International’s advocacy efforts, go to [www.vtol.org/advocacy](http://www.vtol.org/advocacy).

The American Helicopter Society (AHS) International, a 501(c)(3) charitable educational organization, is the world's premier vertical flight technical society. Since its inception in 1943, AHS has been a major force in the advancement of vertical flight, providing global leadership for scientific, technical, educational and legislative initiatives that advance the state of the art.

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