



EAA Chapter 1298
2475 Broad Street
Brooksville, FL 34604

Hernando County Board of County Commissioners
15470 Flight Path Drive
Brooksville, Florida 34604

June 17, 2026

RE: EAA Chapter 1298 Hangar Lease Agreement, Dated August 1, 2026 and FAA Hangar Policy revised May 2025.

Dear Commissioners,

This letter is to accompany the proposed lease and FAA hangar Policy given to Jeff Rogers on June 15, 2026. Steve Miller has advised EAA 1298 that hangar #51 is available at the southeast part of the airport. He gave us a prepared lease for review. We would like to meet with the HCBOCC on the July 28 agenda to discuss the lease terms. We have also added an attachment of costs at the end of the lease, as asked for by the commissioners. As the chapter approaches the termination date of our hangar lease agreement on July 27, 2026, EAA Chapter 1298, a 501(c)3 entity, we respectfully request renewed consideration for county support and reduction from hangar rent at Brooksville-Tampa Bay Regional airport.

For more than 25 years, the County previously recognized the value of our aviation 501(c)3, along with its youth programs and aviation related community support events, by granting a rent reduction. Based on a previous BOCC meeting and our fulfillment of previous lease agreements, we respectfully seek continued support based on the substantial public benefits our chapter provides. The accompanying proposed lease reflects this support. Below is a summary of accomplishments over the past 5 years in support of the Brooksville-Tampa Bay airport, the community and investments in the students within Hernando County. We have continuously committed to promote, encourage, and facilitate an atmosphere where all are welcomed to participate and become part of an aviation community engaged in the promotion of aviation activities and aviation educational opportunities. Here are a few of our accomplishments:

EAA provides a measurable public benefit at no cost to the County, an aviation investment in our community youth The Young Eagles Program gives local youth between 8 to 18 their *first flight* in a general aviation aircraft. These flights spark strong interest in STEM, aviation careers, and aerospace technology. Many participants have gone on to pursue successful engineering, aviation maintenance, military aviation, and commercial airline careers. Every flight includes a safety briefing, career exposure, and mentoring by background-checked volunteer pilots. This Chapter has flown 1790 young adults under the Young Eagles Program. Pilots donate their time, fuel and airplane with no charges for the young adult. In addition, after completing the flight, the Young Eagle receives a flight logbook to record his/her flight and a coupon to take a free on-line ground school course. The Fair Market Value average equivalent dollar value in donated resources was recently calculated to be in excess of \$100,000 a year. In 2025, the Young Eagles, Build & Fly, and WWII memorial fair market value was estimated over \$120,000.

The chapter, through EAA National Ray Scholarship program provides generous support to deserving youths to help cover their flight training expenses with a direct cash award of up to \$12,000. Our 2025 candidate received \$8,000 from the chapter. EAA chapter 1298 and our local AMA (Academy of Model Aeronautics), **Hernando County Radio Control Club** routinely partner to conduct Build and Fly Programs which teach students to construct and fly radio-controlled aircraft, introducing hands-on skills in aircraft construction, problem solving, aerodynamics, teamwork, safe model-aircraft operation engineering and craftsmanship. These activities are free to students, funded entirely by EAA and HCRCC volunteers and provide structured, educational engagement for young people in our community. Many private, commercial and military pilots got their start in aviation building and flying model aircraft. The Fair Market Value equivalent in donated resources for Build and Fly is in excess of \$3,000.

For the county, this produces tangible returns on investment:

- **Reduces financial burden** on county youth programs and services
- **Promotes skilled trades**, mechanics, and STEM pathways that benefit the local workforce
- **Supports workforce pipelines** for aviation maintenance, aerospace manufacturing, and airport-related industries
- **Engages at-risk youth** and provides healthy, supervised activities that cost the county nothing. In short, EAA's presence **lowers costs** for the county while **increasing community value**

Community Involvement We have continuously provided support to the community through several aviation events over the years. The chapter has hosted the Ford Tri-motor aircraft, the B-17, Memorial to the 22 crew members who died in training at the Brooksville airport during WWII. In addition, chapter members initiated and completed the restoration of the bunker backstop, with a refurbished B17 propeller, and a 2,000 lb. inert bomb. The site was turned into a historical marker and memorial. Additionally, we've supported the county's "bring your child to work" day and fly-overs to name a few.

Educational Commitment We have created a resource room which includes several flight simulators available to chapter members and any Young Eagle during Young Eagle rallies to learn the basics of flight. The Resource room also allows access to the Internet for additional on-line educational resources. One simulator is available to train students to fly radio control aircraft. We've hosted STEM students where they participated in a tour of our facilities, had an in-depth discussion between the students, teacher and one of our builders in the manufacture of different types of experimental aircraft (including metal, fiberglass, cloth, and their associated avionics), the availability of participating in the actual build of an aircraft, and an personal invitation to fly with one of our pilots during a upcoming Young Eagle event.

Chapter member supported/hosted FAA Safety Team Seminar One of our members hosted the FFAST seminar at Global Jet Care facility providing critical safety information to all pilots within our community. The discussion included air traffic control communications within the BKV airport airspace and situational awareness. It was an exceptional educational presentation on local communication issues and was well received.

Instrument Meteorological Conditions/Visual Meteorological Conditions Seminars The Chapter presented a seminar at the BKV Administration Building. These safety seminars focus on flying challenges during instrument and visual weather conditions and are given to promote safety primarily to any and all pilots, but are open to anyone in the community interested in aviation safety. Additionally, The Chapter has partnered with the Tampa FAA Safety Team (FFAST) to regularly present FAA sanctioned safety meetings to

enhance and highlight aviation safety issues impacting Tampa and Brooksville airspace. These safety seminars are open to anyone in the community, regardless of aviation status.

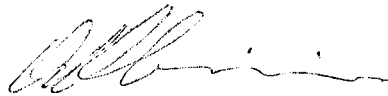
Hangar access is essential for these programs to exist Losing or being priced out of a hangar would severely restrict or eliminate our ability to run Young Eagles flights and Build-and-Fly workshops. In effect, hangar rent relief is not a subsidy to a private club—it is an investment in a youth program the county already benefits from, at a cost far lower than alternative youth-STEM initiatives.

A modest rent reduction provides a high return for the County A small, up-front end adjustment and quarterly refunds based on educational and community events allows us to expand Young Eagles flight events, serve more Hernando County students (including CAP and ROTC high school aviation programs), increase workshop frequency, maintain aircraft and equipment used for chapter members benefit, and continue running programs without charging families. This Goodwill and support will help us continue offering free youth aviation programs that enrich Hernando County and prepare our young people for high-skill careers. The mission to get young people involved with aviation can start with a new project already at EAA Chapter 1298, with a Rans S6 airplane donation, which needs to be built. However, without a hangar, the mission would present a much steeper challenge, and may not come to be part of the shared mission between the county and EAA 1298.

Young Eagles is one of the **largest and most successful youth aviation programs in the world**, and Hernando County's support amplifies local participation and national visibility.

Thank you for considering our request and for supporting aviation education in our county.

Respectfully submitted,



Telly Kassimis
President, EAA Chapter 1298