

Airport in running for major project

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GUILFORD COUNTY — Piedmont Triad International Airport is angling to land an aircraft manufacturing operation that could create at least 1,000 new jobs.

A recent 35-page amendment to the \$25.9 billion state budget targets \$106.7 million for airport improvements as part of the recruitment of the company, which wasn't identified.

The language in amended House Bill 334 doesn't mention the number of jobs that would be created. But state Sen. Gladys Robinson, D-Guilford, told The High Point Enterprise that she understands that the company would be expected to create at least 1,000 new jobs.

The legislation on the incentives refers to jobs having an average yearly wage of \$60,000.

Nearly \$57 million of the

incentives is designated for the construction of one or more hangars. Among the other uses of the state economic development money would be for site and road work.

The legislation doesn't mention a private investment figure by the aircraft manufacturer, nor how many other airports are competitors for the project.

Robinson told The Enterprise that the state budget appropriation is meant to

ensure that state and local economic developers can make a competitive offer.

Airport leaders issued a statement Tuesday saying that they don't publicly discuss specifics of ongoing economic development projects.

"We can say that for many decades, PTI has been home to important aerospace employers like Honda, FedEx, HAECO

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and Cessna," the statement said. "The airport has attracted the interest of a number of aerospace companies, which the local economic development community is actively pursuing."

PTIA has 1,000 acres

available for development. Last decade, airport leaders worked with the N.C. Department of Transportation to build an aircraft bridge over Interstate 73 to make several hundred acres on the northwest side of the airport accessible for development.

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