



Testimony in Support of SB 534

Chair Beyer and Committee,

The Wilsonville Area Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) and the Aurora Airport Owners Association strongly supports the passage of SB 534. The Chamber represents over 500 businesses in the South Metro Portland/North Willamette Valley regions, and our membership employ over 12,000 Oregonians, including all of the business located at the airport through our Aurora Airport Owners Association. We would like to thank Senator Girod for the introduction of this legislation and his strong support of aviation.

The Chamber is a strong advocate for the Aurora State Airport, which is the state's third busiest airport and one of only 84 general aviation airports in the nation identified by the Federal Aviation Administration as nationally significant. The Aurora State Airport, in 2012, saw a total of 94,000 operations which equaled 117,675 general aviation visitors.

The 2014 Oregon Aviation Plan's Economic Impact Study found that the Aurora airport's economic impact equaled nearly \$600 million dollars, not including tax revenue generated from property or income tax. Private property at the airport pays an estimated \$780,000 to local taxing districts for land and buildings (not equipment) including the Aurora Fire District, North Marion School District and Marion County.

The business at the Aurora State Airport employ over 1,200 people which includes two of the best and biggest heavy-lift helicopter companies in the world—Columbia and Helicopter Transport Services, the biggest kit-plane manufacturer in the world, one of the biggest avionics dealers in the country, and life flight air ambulance. An additional 274 jobs off the airport property are directly attributed to off airport visitor spending, totaling nearly 1,500 jobs.

The airport attracts corporate headquarters and larger companies to the region, providing family wage jobs that benefit our citizens. Companies have chosen to locate in our region in part because of the airport and the ability of executives to fly in and out. Having an airport so close for corporate flights with a control tower gives the region a huge advantage when competing with others who cannot offer a regional airport.

The development and implementation of the Aurora Airport Master Plan is critical for the region's economy. A longer and strengthened runway, along with the tower that is being constructed will provide a safer experience for all pilots and for the communities around the airport. Infrastructure such as water, sewer and enhanced transportation will allow more economic development opportunities within the current boundaries of the airport which will not impact foundation farm land.

All of this great economic news at Aurora has taken place with a mix of wells, septic tanks, holding tanks, and several separate fire suppression systems. A unified water and sewer system at Aurora would be a benefit to the environment, allow currently undevelopable land to be developed, enhance public safety, and will allow more family wage jobs to be created in our region.

This legislation is very simple in its approach, which does not mandate cities to provide urban services, but if a local community wants to develop a business relationship to provide services to an airport they are allowed to do so without annexation if an agreement is reached. There are no unintended consequences or mandates it is a simple business arrangement between two government/business entities that would be a benefit to both parties.

Based on all of the benefits of this legislation, and that local government is not mandated to provide services the Wilsonville Area Chamber of Commerce and Aurora Airport Owners Association urges the committee to adopt SB 534.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steve Gilmore".

Steve Gilmore, IOM
Chief Executive Officer
Wilsonville Area Chamber of Commerce