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February 25, 2015

The Honorable Lee Beyer, Chair
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Beyer:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is the world's largest aviation membership association that represents the general aviation interests of our members nationwide, including over 4,900 in Oregon. Since 1939, AOPA has been committed to ensuring the safety, future viability, and development of general aviation as an integral part of our national transportation system. On behalf of AOPA and our members, we offer the following input on Senate Bill 269, which proposes to increase pilot and aircraft registration fees in the state.

AOPA and our members fully acknowledge the importance of funding the aviation system in Oregon, and recognize that Oregon is facing significant challenges in meeting the ongoing capital needs of its airports. We would offer, however, that if the Oregon Department of Aviation were adequately funded through reasonable and equitably applied aviation fuel taxes, there would be no need to increase pilot or aircraft registration fees, or even levy them at all. Oregon is one of just a handful of states with a pilot registration fee. Pilot registration fees are inefficient and administratively burdensome, not just for aircraft owners and pilots in the state, but also for the Oregon Department of Aviation. They require a significant amount of effort to collect, and generate an amount of revenue inadequate to meet the long term aviation funding needs of the state.

As Oregon works to address the funding needs of its aviation system into the future, AOPA urges the committee to consider these fees and any increases in the context of other solutions that could more efficiently address the state's aviation funding needs.

On behalf of AOPA and our members, we appreciate your consideration of our input. Please consider AOPA a resource and partner as the state strives to protect and improve its aviation system. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (301) 695-2094.

Sincerely,

David R. Ulane, A.A.E.
Northwest Mountain Regional Manager

CC: Senate Committee on Business and Transportation Members