

Caddy McKeown and committee members,

I am writing with regard to the proposed tax on leaded aviation fuel (Avgas). There are a number of important reasons this tax is a bad idea. The main one I am addressing is the hardship it will create for Lane Community College students in the Aviation Academy. Most of these students are hard pressed already to pay for their flight training. One student told me just today, that he had to sell prized possessions and save for months just to be able to afford his aviation headset. Historically, such students pay close to \$80,000 to achieve their certifications through multiengine commercial and flight instructor, at approximately 250 hours total flight time. It used to be that they could possibly find a co-pilot job not long after graduation. But with the new federal law that went into effect last year, they now have to accumulate 1,500 hours and achieve an Airline Transport License for a basic airline job. A typical beginning full time co-pilot job pays in the mid twenty thousands per year. In the first several years, most beginning commercial pilots are in dire financial straights. The situation is significantly reducing the number of young people who go into commercial aviation. This is happening just as we go into the biggest pilot shortage in aviation history.

Passing this tax on Avgas will increase the burden on flight students, and further reduce their numbers. Any increase in the price of Avgas has to be passed on from the college to the students. As prices go up, and fewer students enroll, the very existence of this forty five year old flight school begins to be threatened. On behalf of our flight students, our flight school, and the airline industry across the country, please do not pass this regressive tax.

Stephen Boulton, Director of Lane Aviation Academy.