



## OREGON PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Mary Rosenblum  
VP Legislative Affairs  
24198 S Skylane Drive  
Canby, OR 97013  
[rosenblummary@gmail.com](mailto:rosenblummary@gmail.com)

---

February 19, 2017

Chair McKeown and honored committee members,

I am a pilot, a resident of Clackamas County, and the Vice President of Legislative Affairs for the Oregon Pilots Association. I would like to make it clear that no pilot in this state will say that lead in our fuel is not a pollution issue and should not go away, however, the concerns expressed by this proposed legislation are not based on facts and distort the reality of a well ordered and ongoing federal process to eliminate lead from aviation fuel. It is a solution that simply does not have a problem, and could have significant adverse consequences for Oregon citizens, rural municipalities, and the state transportation system.

These piston powered aircraft are used in interstate commerce, fire fighting, pipeline, dam, and dyke surveys, agriculture, search and rescue, critical flight training for airline pilots, emergency services, and, yes, recreation, too. Grounding this fleet on an arbitrary date when a safe and effective fuel may not yet be available will shutter small businesses and cost Oregon well over 3 billion dollars in revenue (the 2015 direct contribution of GA to the Oregon economy).

But isn't that justified to stop the poisoning of our children?

Are we really doing that?

No, there is no safe level of lead in anyone's blood, but lead exists in our environment today in multiple forms. The most recent monitoring data published by DEQ from a location located ¼ mile from the Hillsboro Airport, the busiest airport in Oregon, shows the annual average lead concentration in the air was 0.0030 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, *50 times below the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for lead of 0.15 micrograms.*

When our Federal Representative Suzanne Bonamici asked her legislative staff to investigate this issue in 2016, the DEQ and Oregon Department of Health both offered

the same information: detectable levels of lead in the blood of children in the Hillsboro area were overwhelmingly traceable to leaded house paint or lead solder in plumbing, *that not one case was traceable to leaded aviation fuel or emissions.*

A federal program, the Piston Aviation Fuels Initiative program, is currently on track to provide a safe alternative to leaded aviation fuel by the end of 2018 and will provide a clear transition timeline to switch from leaded aviation fuel to the unleaded alternative, the same way we transitioned from leaded auto gas to unleaded auto gas in the 60s. A pdf of that program is included with my testimony and makes the complexity of this undertaking and the timeline for its completion clear. I urge you to read it.

Avgas has many qualities necessary to prevent engine failure in flight, it's not simply a matter of removing the tetra ethyl lead. Auto gas in Denver is formulated differently from auto gas in near-sea-level Portland. Aircraft may take off at sea level and climb to 15,000 feet and temperatures well below zero. Evaluating the impact of completely new fuel chemistry is a complicated undertaking, and the FAA is to be commended for sticking to their 2018 timetable, considering the hundreds of thousands of hours of engine testing required. I am a pilot. I do not want my plane to fall out of the sky and onto your roof. Neither of us will be happy with the outcome.

As of February 17, 2017, Chris D'Acosta, CEO of Swift Fuel, producer of one of the two fuels currently in Phase II testing, stated in a phone call that the FAA expects to name a replacement fuel late in 2018. At that time, they will roll out the timeline for a transition that will allow fuel dealers to switch from the leaded product to the unleaded product in much the same manner that we switched from leaded auto fuel to unleaded auto fuel in the 60s.

Mr. D'Acosta suggested that the best path forward for state level legislation would be to encourage the production and distribution of the unleaded fuel within the state. This would create new jobs, and the fuel is compatible with bio-fuel production -- OHSU has already developed a process for biofuel production of jet fuel.

There is room to legislatively close the door on the availability of leaded aviation fuel in this state, but it *must* be in step with the federal timeline or risk doing irreparable harm to Oregon's citizens, particularly our rural communities where the local airport plays a significant role on the local economy.

If we get ahead of the federal mandate, we ground search and rescue, emergency services, agricultural, business, interstate commerce, pipeline, dyke, and dam survey flights, and flight training, as well as recreational flights. Jobs will move over our borders. Pilots will still fly into federally controlled Oregon airspace with their tanks full of leaded fuel, so the lead will not go away, but jobs, dollars, and a slice of the Oregon tax base will.

We urge a do not pass recommendation for this bill. It is premature and solves a problem that does not exist. Far better, if the health and safety of children is really the issue here, to pass legislation to promote testing of household water and environs for lead contamination by paint and plumbing and offer mitigation plans for those affected.

Thank you for your time and your clear headed evaluation of this issue.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Rosenblum  
Oregon Pilots Association  
VP Legislative Affairs