

Oregon Pilots Association

Mary Rosenblum
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Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

Honored Chair Beyer and Committee Members,

As a representative of the pilot population in Oregon, I'd like to address the issues raised by Senate Bill 128. At first glance, local control of any airport seems ideal -- the airport can be managed so as to best suit the needs of the community.

But airports, from the strip in Burns, Oregon to the three runways at Hillsboro, the busiest airport in Oregon, are not intended to serve local interests only. They are intended to serve the needs of Oregon's transportation system, which includes commerce, emergency services, agriculture, critical flight training for our national airlines and firefighting.

There will be times when local concerns coincide with the needs of the state transportation system, and there will be times when those local issues may be at odds with the larger transportation need.

The issue of federal funding for airports such as Portland-Hillsboro and Portland-Troutdale, is also critical. While the FAA funds the major maintenance costs of airports it has included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems, it requires the airport sponsor to obligate itself to a long list of Grant Assurances. If the airport sponsor fails to comply with any of those grant assurances, the funding will end and the sponsor will be severely penalized by the FAA. This funding is significant at both Portland-Hillsboro and Portland-Troutdale at 12.9 million in 2016 at Hillsboro with another 21 million scheduled to be spent by 2020 at these two airports.

This money goes directly into the community as it pays for major construction projects and maintenance work.

If the airport sponsor is unable to guarantee that the Grant Assurance obligations will be met, the funding will end. This will harm not only the local economy, but it will degrade the state transportation system and may potentially lead to safety issues as the infrastructure degrades. Airport maintenance that meets FAA safety standards is very costly, which is why the FAA subsidizes airports it deems critical to the national aviation system.

Local control also leaves the door open to misuse by private interests, who might have an agenda to acquire or control the valuable land on which most airports are located for personal gain.

The Hillsboro and Troutdale airports do have an impact on the communities that have grown up around them, and a system that includes community input in airport development is

desirable, but these airports are key elements in the state and the national transportation system, and as such they must adhere to strict federal standards. We recommend a 'do not pass' for this bill and suggest that ways to combine local interests with the Port of Portland's management of the two airports without compromising the airports' funding or their role as key elements in our transportation system could be considered.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Rosenblum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Rosenblum
VP Legislative Affairs
Oregon Pilots Association