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Testimony to the House Committee on Transportation on HB 2109

February 22, 2016

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council **supports** HB 2109, which prohibits selling, dispensing or using aviation fuel that contains lead or lead compounds after January 1, 2022.

Aviation gasoline used to power piston engine aircraft is the single largest source of lead emission in the U.S. and poses a significant threat to public health and the environment.[i] Despite the phase-out of lead in automobile fuel more than 20 years ago, nearly 500 tons of airborne lead is still emitted annually from aviation gasoline.[ii] As the only remaining lead-containing transportation fuel, aviation gasoline directly contributes to lead exposures, which are particularly detrimental to children. The Centers for Disease Control has confirmed that no blood level of lead is safe in children; even low levels of this known neurotoxin have been shown to permanently affect children's IQ and ability to pay attention, which also impacts their academic achievement.[iii]

Exposure to airborne lead emissions from aviation gasoline is a significant problem that affects Oregonians and the nation at large. According to an estimate by the EPA, 16 million people live and 3 million children go to school within a half-mile of an airport where leaded aviation gasoline is used.[iv] Increased exposure to leaded aviation gasoline has been shown to directly jeopardize people's health. A 2013 study of aircraft maintenance workers showed that those who worked at airports that sold leaded aviation gasoline had higher blood lead levels than workers at airports that did not sell leaded aviation gasoline.[v] Another study on leaded aviation gas exposure in 2011 found that children living near airports at which planes used leaded aviation gas had higher concentrations of lead in their blood than other children.[vi] In addition, an analysis by the EPA demonstrated that, "those living in the vicinity of airports are more likely to be low-income households and minority residents," a population that already faces increased health risks.[vii]

Unleaded FAA-approved aviation fuel has been available since the 1980s and can be used in about 40% of general aviation planes[viii]. This bill gives ample time (five years) for airports to go lead-free. As soon as aviation is given a regulatory signal, the market for cleaner aviation fuels will develop in Oregon, resulting in availability of affordable lead-free fuel for all planes.

Thank you for considering HB 2109. Cleaning up aviation fuel is critical for protecting our children and the communities surrounding airports, as well as the health of airport workers, pilots, and passengers, all of whom currently remain unprotected from a known toxin.

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[i] "Does the Continued Use of Lead in Aviation Fuel Endanger Public Health and the Environment?" Scientific American. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/lead-in-aviation-fuel/>

[ii] "Lead Emissions from the Use of Leaded Aviation Gasoline in the United States." (2008). U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <https://nnsa.energy.gov/sites/default/files/nnsa/inlinefiles/epa%202009a.pdf>

[iii] "What Do Parents Need to Know to Protect Their Children?" Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 January 2017. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/acclpp/blood_lead_levels.htm>

[iv] "Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Lead Emissions From Piston-Engine Aircraft Using Leaded Aviation Gasoline; Proposed Rule." (2010). U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-04-28/pdf/2010-9603.pdf>

[v] Park, Won-Ju, Hye-Min Gu, and Suk-Ho Lee. "Blood Lead Level and Types of Aviation Fuel in Aircraft Maintenance Crew." *Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine* (2013): 1087-091. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24261063>

[vi] Miranda, Marie Lynn, Rebecca Anthopolos, and Douglas Hastings. "A Geospatial Analysis Of The Effects Of Aviation Gasoline On Childhood Blood Lead Levels." *Environmental Health Perspectives* (2011): 1513-516. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3230438/>

[vii] "Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Lead Emissions From Piston-Engine Aircraft Using Leaded Aviation Gasoline; Proposed Rule." (2010). U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Web. 13 Feb. 2017. <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2010-04-28/pdf/2010-9603.pdf>

[viii] "Leaded Aviation Fuels in the Environment." (2013). Federal Aviation Administration. Web. 20 Feb. 2017. < https://www.faa.gov/news/fact_sheets/news_story.cfm?newsId=14754>