

February 9, 2018

Representative Susan McLain
Chair, Transportation Policy Committee
900 Court St. NE, H477
Salem, OR 97301

Re; Request of support for HB 4092

Dear Chair McLain and Members of the House Transportation Policy Committee,

I am writing to you all, asking for the support of HB 4092.

Our company operates corporate aircraft in support of power line construction throughout the nation to include Alaska and Hawaii. All of our construction operations focus on safety and efficiency, in that order. This includes the operation of our helicopters and airplanes. The extension of the Aurora runway will greatly enhance the safe and efficient operation of our airplanes. With respect to safety, a runway extension provides our pilots the extra space to safely abort a takeoff in the event of an emergency. With respect to efficiency, we are currently operating "constrained" as we are forced to fly from Aurora to Hillsboro to take on fuel before we can go to our east coast or Hawaii jobs. The runway extension would allow us to go direct.

These aircraft are used to regularly move line construction workers, estimators, project managers, truck drivers, mechanics, logistics planners, environmental managers and numerous others in our company. During disaster events (i.e., ice storms, fires, hurricanes, etc.), our aircraft are counted upon to be part of the recovery efforts as we move key personnel to reconnect power both here in Oregon and throughout the United States.

With over 600 employees nationwide, 130 are based within 10 miles of Aurora Airport. The economic footprint of our expenditures in the communities of Canby and Woodburn through our payroll and direct purchasing is significant. A prime example is the purchasing of spare truck parts from NAPA Auto Parts – in excess of \$1,000,000.00/year. These purchases go to a locally owned Wilsonville franchise because we've chosen to locate our business near the Aurora State Airport.

A 6,000' runway has been in the KUAO master plan since 1976 and reaffirmed again in the 2013 master plan update (in which we actively participated). Years of public process went into the most recent master planning to include more than 6 well publicized and attended public meetings. Despite that which you may hear, HB 4092 will not take farm land out of production.

An additional advantage of the runway extension is the benefit of support to emergency preparedness. Being just south of the Boone Bridge on I-5 and above the 100 year flood



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plain, the Aurora Airport will be a significant base of operations in a disaster, especially one that would close that bridge. Most likely, this would be the direct supporting and transport of critically ill or injured as well as the movement of emergency supplies. A fully functional airport with a runway capable of supporting emergency operations will be necessary and Aurora is located precisely to be that airport.

Should you have questions about our company, our aircraft or how we might support and respond to state and national emergencies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Tony Helbling
Logistics Manager
Wilson Construction Company