

Date: February 8, 2020

To: Oregon Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

From: Miki and David Barnes



Bill: SB 1530

Topic: Testimony urging this committee to require caps on all transportation fuels, including aviation fuel. We oppose the exemption of aviation fuel, particularly leaded avgas, set forth in Section 6. Exclusions. (1)(a) of the bill.

We strongly feel that aviation fuel should not be exempt from cap and trade requirements.

We further urge the Oregon Legislature to establish policies to reduce aviation activity in Oregon, particularly recreational flying and flight training due to the significant environmental, livability and health impacts.

Hillsboro Airport (HIO), the largest general aviation airport in the state, is primarily a flight training facility. A major tenant at this airport, Hillsboro Aero Academy, claims on its website that it has trained pilots for over 75 different countries. In addition, Hillsboro Aviation, Hagele Aviation, Christenson Aviation, and private pilots engage in training activities at this facility. The Hillsboro Airport currently serves as a hub for Taiwanese pilots. Numerous Chinese students train at the Redmond and Prineville airports in Central Oregon under the direction of Hillsboro Aero Academy.

Stark's Twin Oaks, located approximately 6 miles south of HIO, also engages in flight training as does Scappoose Airpark, where Senator Betsy Johnson and her husband John Helm own a business, TransWestern Aviation.

Troutdale, McMinnville and Aurora airports are also part of a massive flight training network throughout the region.

All of the airports mentioned above have received generous financial support from the state legislature through Connect Oregon and other sources of state funding. Some have received millions from the FAA as well.

Some examples include:

- A \$17 million dollar runway at the Hillsboro Airport (HIO). The state of Oregon contributed a \$4 million Connect Oregon grant. The Port of Portland and the Oregon Department of Transportation also contributed to this project.
- The state owned Aurora Airport is currently pursuing a \$37 million runway extension project. This airport has been a frequent recipient of state handouts.
- The McMinnville Airport which is also a flight training facility received a Connect Oregon IV grant of \$786,083 for a runway rehabilitation/reconstruction project.
- Other airports that engage in flight training, including Stark's Twin Oaks and the Scappoose Airpark, have also been on the receiving end of state sponsored grants.

All of the above mentioned airports generate profits from the sale of leaded avgas and/or jet fuel.

Although these general aviation airports and flight schools are subsidized with public funds, HB1530 currently exempts them from all responsibility for their carbon emissions. Bear in mind that unlike arrival and destination flights, training aircraft often fly repeatedly over the same area for hours on end.

Training flights circle rural communities, emitting greenhouse gases and depositing lead and other toxins on our schools, homes, farmland and vineyards. Under the proposed exemption, the out-of-state flight school owners and their students pay no penalties under cap and trade, while receiving multi-million dollar subsidies to maintain and enlarge their facilities. Meanwhile the rest of us who travel on roadways in cars and trucks will be taxed to support these freeloaders.

Flight Training Airport Statistics

The following section lists the number of annual operations logged by 6 general aviation airports in or in close proximity to the greater Portland area in 2018.

- Hillsboro Airport logged 200,000, averaging about 547 per day.
- McMinnville logged about 63,500, roughly 173 per day.
- Starks Twin Oaks logged averaged 67 flights per day which translates in to 24,455 annual flights.
- Scappoose Airpark logged 60,000, an average of 164 daily
- Aurora Airport logged 63,113, around 117 per day.
- Troutdale logged 133,896, about 367 daily. Much of the helicopter training that was taking place at HIO has recently moved to Troutdale.

Total operations for these 6 airports combined in 2018 came to 544,964 which translates into 1493 flights per day, 62 per hour. This is in addition to the 232,499, primarily arrival and destination flights, logged by PDX in that same year. When these are included, the total comes to 777,463, on average 2130 flights per day, 89 per hour.

This is toxic, unacceptable and unsustainable. In the interest of current and future generations immediate steps must be taken to reduce aviation activity.

All the statistics gathered for the airports listed above were obtained from the FAA Terminal Area Forecasts excepting Stark's Twin Oaks, where data was gathered from AirNav.

Reasonable Steps to Reduce Aviation Activity

- Apply cap and trade requirements to aviation fuel
- Reduce/eliminate flight training
- Disincentivize commercial and business class air travel.
- Desincentivize both business and leisure corporate jet travel
- Construct high speed rail along the Cascade corridor
- Eliminate state funding for Oregon general aviation airports.
- Terminate Portland Community College's flight training program.

For far too long, the Oregon Legislature has failed to address the significant negative impact of aviation travel and flight training on local residents. SB1530 presents an opportunity to begin to address this egregious oversight.

The fate of the planet hangs in the balance. Our hope is that the members of the Oregon legislature will make the health and well-being of current and future generations their top priority.