



February 13, 2020

Senator Beyer, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Transportation
900 Court Street NE, S-411
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Representative Caddy McKeown, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Transportation
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, H-476
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 4036-City of Eugene supports -16 Amendments

Regarding Oregon House Bill 4036, the City of Eugene/Eugene Airport is in support of the -16 amendment as written, lifting the sunset on the current aviation fuel tax law.

We object to the -17 amendment, which removes statute prioritization of the distribution of funds generated from the aviation fuel tax. This would potentially have a detrimental effect on airports statewide, including non-hub and small hub commercial service airports, and general aviation airports. Language in the original draft HB4036 matches the language adopted by the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODA) stakeholder rulemaking committee late last year and recommended to the Oregon State Aviation Board (Board).

The -17 amendment disregards the currently stated first-priority “to assist airports in Oregon with match requirements for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants.” We do not support removing the existing statutory language related to prioritization and moving that process to Rule Making, which could result in a change in this prioritization and could diminish the input of the Area Commissions on Transportation (ACT). It would diminish the role of the ACTs in making meaningful recommendations to the Board as these regional decisions could be disregarded by members of the Board. Ultimately, removal of the prioritizations would mean airports and other interested parties would have to lobby members of the Board to prevail in grant awards.

For most airports across the state, the current prioritization set forth for Critical Oregon Airport Relief (CORE) grants leverage a 10% local match (via ODA funding) to gain the 90% AIP funding. With ConnectOregon no longer a viable funding source for aviation projects, many airports across the state now rely solely on the CORE grant match as their only way to apply for and obtain AIP grants, providing for critical infrastructure and investment in the local and state economies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Submitted electronically
Tim Doll, A.A.E.
Eugene Airport Director