

June 13, 2015

To:
Steve Bender, Administrator
Eric Sorenson, Assistant
Joint Way and Means Committee
Transportation and Economic Development Sub Committee

This letter is in support of HB 2075; increasing Oregon aviation infrastructure funding.

Oregon Aviation Industries (ORAVI) is a cluster group of 85 aviation member companies located statewide, focused on economic development of the commercial aviation industry in Oregon.

I represent ORAVI as Executive Director and our members include heavy-lift helicopter companies, aircraft manufacturers, drone companies, aircraft services and training operators, colleges and airports. We are one of the industry clusters initiated by the Oregon Business Council.

The aviation transportation system and the Department of Aviation in Oregon are underfunded. We see a need for development in the following areas: 1- grant match funds to leverage federal dollars for rural airports, 2-creation of affordable air transportation services among some of our 95 public use rural airports, 3-maintenance of airports for safety and operations, 4-emergency airport preparedness for natural disaster relief, and 5-economic development assistance for the aviation industry in Oregon.

In addition to existing aviation operations, the emerging UAS opportunity, leveraged by our three FAA designated Unmanned Aircraft Systems test ranges, puts Oregon into a leadership position upon which we can capitalize. ORAVI works closely with Soar Oregon, the Association of Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), Business Oregon, Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition, Oregon Chamber of Commerce, and educational institutions to support and advance UAS economic development statewide. Adequately supported, we believe that UAS is a huge opportunity, especially for rural Oregon.

To address these issues, ORAVI submitted HB 2075, proposing an increase of aviation fuel tax by 4 cents per gallon which would provide more than ten million dollars per year to address the critical needs that we see in aviation transportation, economic development and rural job creation. Urban based opposition forces have reduced this amount to 2 cents per gallon as reflected in amendment number 5 of the bill. Oregon's jet fuel tax is currently 1 cent per gallon and has been at that level for 50 years. With an increase, our aviation fuel taxes

would still be lower than other states in the region. HB 2075 has a very strong rural Oregon focus and it will provide essential transportation and economic development benefits statewide.

Oregon Aviation Industries (ORAVI) supports HB 2075 and encourages its passage in the 2015 Legislative Session. We look forward to attending the June 15th committee hearing and presenting our recommendation for an affirmative vote on this important rural transportation and economic development bill.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Gale 'Jake' Jacobs
Executive Director
Oregon Aviation Industries

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