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To: Senator Anderson and Representative Gomberg
From: Newport City Council, Airport Committee, and Airport Director
CC: Spencer Nebel, City Manager
Date: January 19, 2021
Subject: Aviation System Action Program (ASAP)

Dear Senator Anderson and Representative Gomberg:

As you know, the 2015 Oregon Legislature approved HB 2075 which provided a two cent increase to the state's tax on aviation fuels. Money from that program has funded the Aviation System Action Program (ASAP), a project which has helped pay for 109 opportunities at 49 airports throughout the state. The program will sunset, or expire, on January 1, 2022. As representatives of the City of Newport and its Airport Advisory Committee, we urge you to co-sponsor the bill which has been introduced to prevent the end of this program.

The small increase in aviation tax generated about \$4 million [before Covid-19] each year. That money has been used as a local match for federal grants, resiliency projects and economic development. The Newport Airport has received over \$57,000 in grants from the ASAP program. This money helped us receive FAA matching grants for our Airport Improvement Plans and resiliency grants for the Cascadia Subduction emergency event as well as environmental rehabilitation and repair projects.

As you know, our airport is one of 22 municipal airports, most of which receive some type of government subsidy. It was originally built during World War II but continues to provide vital services, jobs and intangible assets to Newport and the extended central coast.

The airport not only offers hangars to small airplanes [for which the city receives regular rental payments] but also provides much more to the community:

- 1) Fed Ex and UPS maintain daily air freight services for the entire central coast, shipping both commercial and personal supplies, services even more critical as Covid-19 keeps us at home and increases online purchasing;
- 2) Since 1987, ONP has been home to the United States Coast Guard Newport Air Station – a vital partner in supporting our safety and security;
- 3) Life Flight is one of the airport's tenants, providing emergency transportation from the coast to the valley;

- 4) The airport sells aviation fuel both to commercial and to private air carriers who visit Newport;
- 5) Those who fly into Newport – whether small businesses or private citizens – spend time in our hotels, enjoy our restaurants and – when safely allowed – visit our Aquarium, Marine Sciences Center, Performing Arts Center and other venues, supporting local jobs and providing income for our community.

Perhaps most critically, our airport is located at the highest elevation of any of the airports along the Pacific Coast and is the only one above the tsunami line. As a result, it is a vital distribution point for relief and assistance during a major Cascadia event or any disaster which destroys access to our roadways or bridges.

The airport benefits all of us in many ways, both seen and unseen. The opportunity to apply for future grants through the ASAP program will help ensure the long term maintenance and stability of our airport. We hope you will help us by co -sponsoring the bill to maintain this important but small aviation tax.

Respectfully,



Dean Sawyer,
Newport Mayor



Spencer R. Nebel,
City Manager



Jeff Bertuleit,
Chair, Airport Advisory Committee



Lance Vanderbeck,
Airport Director