



ASSOCIATION FOR UNCREWED VEHICLE SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

CASCADE CHAPTER

11160 SW Durham Lane, Suite 7

McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Patrick Sherman

lucidity@roswellflighttestcrew.com – 503-332-6909

ADVOCATE. EDUCATE. CONNECT.

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To: The Oregon State Legislature, Joint Committee on Transportation

Dear Senator Gorsek, Rep. McLain, Rep. Helfrich and Committee Members:

As a representative of the Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) Cascade Chapter, a non-profit organization based here in Oregon to advance the development of autonomous systems, I thank you for this opportunity to testify regarding House Bill 3257. Specifically, we would like to add our support to the other representatives of this industry that have also come forward: the AUVSI national organization and Oregon Aviation Industries, among others.

The electrification of air transportation will clearly represent the next major epoch in the history of flight. Development is well underway for electric motors capable of replacing the fuel-powered turbines on commercial jetliners and smaller aircraft that have traditionally been powered by piston-driven engines, such as general aviation and small commuter and cargo airframes. Clearly, these will only be workable if airports and the electrical grid are able to supply the massive amounts of power they will require.

However, it is likely that the advent of small, short range vertical take-off and landing aircraft, known as eVTOL systems, will enter service even sooner. These may operate autonomously with only a passenger aboard, or may initially enter service with a human pilot serving a handful of passengers. Indeed, such systems have been developed and tested right here in Oregon, such as the successful Project Vahana, sponsored by global aviation powerhouse Airbus, which first flew at the Pendleton UAS Test Range.

For the economic and environmental benefits of these systems to accrue to Oregon, the state must have appropriate infrastructure in place to support them. It is for this reason that the AUVSI Cascade Chapter is a strong supporter of HB 3257 and urges its adoption. It is critical to convene the relevant stakeholders to develop a clear and coherent strategy for developing this infrastructure and ensuring it meets the needs of this burgeoning industry, and this bill will accomplish precisely that.

We would only add that the bill and the resulting task force should consider electrically powered air cargo transportation systems, as well as those that carry passengers. As these can be smaller and will face less regulatory scrutiny from the Federal Aviation Administration, it is likely that such systems will be in regular use even before eVTOL air taxis enter widespread service. This is an important consideration because people and cargo will not always necessarily travel to the same destinations.

In particular, autonomous air cargo systems would create the possibility of providing fast and reliable transportation of critical goods, such as medicine and medical samples, to and from those portions of the state that are less densely populated and require considerably more time to reach using ground transportation. Supporting infrastructure will be required in those locations, as well, if they are to benefit from this technology.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, and on behalf of the AUVSI Cascade Chapter,

Professor Patrick Sherman
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Visit our website at: www.cascadeAUVSI.org





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