

February 12, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal & World Affairs  
RE: Testimony in Support of Proposed Amendments to Senate Concurrent Resolution 2

Chair Manning, Vice-Chair Thatcher, & Members of the Committee:

The Charbonneau District of Wilsonville appreciates the history of Aurora State Airport as a flight strip contributing to the United States Air Force efforts during WWII. Used as a base for air patrols and flight training is not unlike its current roles, where a civil air patrol and flight training are regular uses today.

Currently, the airport serves the public interest as a general aviation airport, with its landing strip, and by virtue of its Through-the-Fence operations, aircraft-related businesses and support services. There is no question that the airport can fulfill a greater role and capability for emergency and disaster management, should the Oregon Aviation Department focus on providing resources for expanding capacity for this.

The two heavy-lift helicopter operators, as well as an air medical service located at the airport are critical assets on which to build a more robust infrastructure and capacity that can better support emergency management for a populous, multi-county region of the state.

Additionally, there are also two firms whose business of installing and repairing components of the electrical grid for the entire nation, makes adding resiliency to Aurora State Airport an important priority for the State of Oregon, instead of leveraging its scarce funds using the FAA to subsidize a questionable business model focused on executive jets.

An airport built on a foundation of having robust emergency and disaster management better serves the general public, and has positive regional importance in safety and emergency responsiveness. Currently, the Aurora State Airport is underprepared, without the infrastructure and facilities to handle this safety responsibility.

The current infrastructure of Aurora State Airport is 85 years old, with three small drain fields, limited fresh water supply, no fire suppression, no fire fighting equipment, no security, minimum advanced communications and inadequately prepared property for staging an emergency management response. This is where the state aviation board can apply its limited resources for improving Aurora State Airport as a critical emergency response and management center, not developing property for executive commuter jets.

Lastly, the Aurora Airport Improvement Association is a group of property owners who have a specific self-interest in developing property for personal gain, not public benefit.

Respectfully senators, that is the vital role to be fulfilled by this airport, returning it to its foundational roots. With that, Amendments offered by Senator Woods has our full support. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

David E. Mauk

Charbonneau District of Wilsonville, #1 voting precinct in Oregon  
Director and Civic Affairs Chair, Charbonneau Country Club