

Submitter: Blane Robb
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2738

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed legislation that seeks to prohibit the use of leaded fuel at race tracks located in cities with populations of 500,000 or greater as of January 1, 2026. This proposal, while well-intentioned, poses a significant threat to the vitality of local race tracks, including the Portland International Raceway (PIR), and could lead to adverse economic and social consequences for our community.

The prohibition of leaded fuel would fundamentally alter the operations of race tracks that have long relied on specific fuel formulations to meet the performance requirements of various racing events. At PIR, for instance, certain categories of events still depend on leaded fuel, despite a noted decline in its demand. A 2017 survey indicated that while the overall use of leaded fuel was decreasing, it remained essential for specific racing categories. Eliminating the option to use leaded fuel could result in the cancellation of these events, thereby reducing the track's event diversity and appeal.

The abrupt removal of leaded fuel without viable alternatives could discourage racers from participating in events at PIR. This potential decline in participation not only threatens the existence of local race tracks but also jeopardizes the economic ecosystem that supports them, including local businesses and employment opportunities.

While concerns about lead emissions are valid, it is important to consider the broader context. The use of leaded fuel in racing constitutes a minor fraction of overall lead emissions, especially when compared to other sources such as aviation. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified piston-engine aircraft operating on leaded fuel as the dominant source of lead emissions in the air.

PIR is a special place to me—it's where I began my racing career. If this bill passes, it could take away the opportunity for others to have the same experience. PIR is more than just a race track; it's a community where racers become friends and family. We owe it to future generations to preserve this great tradition and keep the spirit of racing alive.

Thank you for considering this perspective