

March 17, 2025

To: Members of the Joint Transportation Committee
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97304

Subject: Support for Jet Fuel Tax Increase to Strengthen the Oregon Department of Aviation and the ASAP Grant Program

Dear Chairs McLain and Gorsek and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Drone Service Providers Alliance (DSPA) and our more than 30,000 small and medium-sized drone businesses nationwide, I am writing to express our strong support for HB 2153. This bill will provide much-needed funding to the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODAV) and expand the Aviation System Action Plan (ASAP) grant program, ensuring that Oregon's aviation infrastructure is prepared to support the growing drone services industry and the broader uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) sector.

Drones are revolutionizing industries across Oregon. Small and medium-sized drone service providers support agriculture, infrastructure inspection, public safety, wildfire response, mapping and surveying, and the media industry. However, for drone operators to work effectively, Oregon needs modernized infrastructure, robust airspace awareness tools, and investments in advanced aviation technologies. HB 2153 represents a critical step toward ensuring that Oregon is not only maintaining its current aviation system but also adapting to the rapidly evolving landscape of uncrewed aviation.

Supporting UAS infrastructure is also a public safety issue. Many law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and emergency responders rely on drone service providers to assist in search-and-rescue missions, disaster response, and wildfire surveillance. However, much of Oregon's aviation infrastructure lacks the necessary communications and charging infrastructure to fully integrate uncrewed systems into emergency operations. With wildfires becoming more severe and frequent, it is imperative that Oregon invests in upgrading airports and aviation facilities to support drone operations and real-time aerial intelligence gathering.

Additionally, Oregon has the opportunity to leverage federal funding through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) to support aviation electrification and infrastructure upgrades. HB 2153 would provide the necessary state matching funds to unlock these federal dollars, enabling investments in charging stations, vertiports for electric aircraft, weather stations, and on-airport beyond visual line-of-sight (BVLOS) infrastructure.

The reality is that ODAV is stretched too thin to effectively maintain and modernize Oregon's aviation infrastructure. With just three full-time staff responsible for managing 28 state-owned airports, the agency needs additional resources to meet the demands of both traditional aviation and emerging UAS technologies. Passing HB 2153 would provide sustainable funding to support airports, enhance airspace integration for drones, and prepare for the increasing role of UAS in Oregon's economy and emergency response efforts.

By passing HB 2153, the Oregon Legislature will ensure that the state's aviation system remains safe, functional, and ready for the next generation of air transportation. This is not about leading the nation in aviation innovation—it is about making practical investments that support Oregon's businesses, public safety, and economic development.

We strongly urge you to support HB 2153 and invest in the future of small and medium-sized drone service providers, the aviation industry, and public safety operations. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or would like further information on how this bill will benefit Oregon's drone industry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vic Moss", written in a cursive style.

Vic Moss

Drone Service Providers Alliance

vic@dspalliance.org