

Subject: Support for HB2153 and Enhanced Aviation System Action Plan Funding

On behalf of Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at Pendleton, I am writing to express our strong support for the proposed increase in the jet fuel tax (HB2153). This funding measure is critical for sustaining and expanding the Oregon Department of Aviation (ODAV) programs, including the Aviation System Action Plan (ASAP) fund, which has been instrumental in supporting airport infrastructure, safety, and operational readiness across the state.

Eastern Oregon Regional Airport has directly benefited from the ASAP grant program. For example, we recently addressed a runway/taxiway paving restoration project, a critical safety improvement made possible through ASAP resources. This project not only enhanced the safety of aircraft operations but also ensured smoother transitions between ground and air activities. Such improvements are pivotal for our airport, which serves as a regional hub for economic activities, emergency services, and community connectivity.

In addition to the specific impact at our airport, the ASAP program provides the following key benefits statewide:

- **Equitable Access to Resources:** Ensuring airports of all sizes, from rural airstrips to larger regional facilities, receive support for their unique operational needs.
- **Economic and Community Impact:** Airports contribute significantly to local economies, tourism, emergency response, and wildfire management, benefiting both urban and rural communities.
- **Systemwide Resiliency:** Strengthening Oregon's aviation infrastructure to meet future challenges, including aging facilities, advancing safety measures, and adapting to emerging aviation technologies.
- **Leveraging Federal Dollars:** State-level funding often fulfills matching requirements to secure substantial federal grants, exponentially increasing the impact of state contributions.

Since its inception, ODAV has awarded 257 grants totaling over \$20.8 million, which have supported projects with an overall value of nearly \$308 million. These projects have positively impacted general aviation, economic development, and emergency operations, including wildfire response and disaster relief. However, demand consistently exceeds available resources, and with rising infrastructure needs and increasing construction costs, a sustainable funding source has become imperative.

Oregon's aviation network is a cornerstone of the state's economy and community resiliency. Airports like Eastern Oregon Regional Airport play a critical role in supporting local businesses, transportation, and emergency services. A modest increase in the jet fuel tax will equip ODAV with the resources needed to continue supporting airports statewide and addressing future challenges.

We strongly urge you to support HB2153 to ensure the sustainability and resiliency of Oregon's aviation system.

Sincerely,



Dan Bandel

Airport Manager

Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at Pendleton

