

Senate Finance

04/23/2024 02:00 PM

HB24-1235 Reduce Aviation Impacts on Communities

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Rachel Stanton For themselves	I want to express support for this bill, as a homeowner directly impacted by unfettered growth of General Aviation in my community. Key features of this bill can help rein in abuses of communities by local airport operators. Specifically I support requiring adherence to aviation easements, requiring development and enforcement of noise reduction programs, and the addition of two members to the aeronautical board to be drawn from impacted communities. It is critical to prevent the growth of airports where dense communities exist. We simply cannot have small, sleepy airports decide they want to expand operations after communities are built around them and the airport failed to buy enough land early on. This is the issue with RMMA and Centennial airports which are ruining the quality of life for nearby residents by becoming flight school hubs AFTER neighborhoods were built. My hope is the terms of this bill can help.
Donna Urban For themselves	Please support HB-1235. I live near Centennial Airport and am victim to constant noise pollution from the flight training and recreational pilots. My mental and physical health is suffering. The noise will wake me up out of a dead sleep when the planes fly over in the middle of the night. On nice, sunny days, the noise is a constant buzzing that goes on non-stop. I no longer enjoy my outdoor space. I'm an angry person and cannot believe the injustice of having our beautiful state taken over by aviation interests. My blood pressure is higher than normal, even though I've never had high blood pressure in my life. I also am concerned about lead being dumped on vegetables grown in the garden. I've tried working with the airport's noise roundtable for years, but nothing has changed. The situation worsens by the day. I hope for bad weather every day, now, just to get some quiet. When I moved into my home in 2003, I knew the airport was there but I rarely heard any air traffic. In 2016, the increase in training started, and it's steadily gotten worse despite the "voluntary" programs and noise roundtable. It's out of control. We need HB-1235 to bring some balance back. Thank you.

<p>Shawn McKean For themselves</p>	<p>I am writing to urge you to support Senate Finance HB24-1235, "Reducing Aviation Impacts on Communities." I live about a mile from Rocky Metro Metropolitan Airport. Over the last five years or so, there has been a dramatic increase in training schools (mostly non-Colorado companies) operating in and out of RMMA; they conduct endless, repetitive "touch-and-goes" that fly directly over my neighborhood. It is frequently so loud that it literally sounds like a war zone outside my home. I suffer sleep and anxiety issues as a result. The noise pollution is in addition to the lead being spewed by these prop planes; I am uncomfortable having my 3-year-old granddaughter for extended visits.</p> <p>In my opinion, training flights operating out of RMMA should be discontinued entirely (I know that HB24-1235 will not accomplish this but it is a good start). They present a danger to surrounding communities - a crash with serious consequences is inevitable - and the negative health consequences (both noise and lead) are unacceptable. There is also the problem of the training schools' predatory lending practices.</p> <p>RMMA has proven again and again that it is not interested in working with surrounding communities to come up with a workable solution to the noise and lead problems. It is my understanding that Jefferson County, which owns RMMA, recently indicated it plans to eliminate the minimum standards which require airport tenants to adhere to Master Plan and Land Use, and has made material misrepresentations in official filings, including those to the FAA. The Community Noise Roundtable sessions RMMA held proved to be a joke, with several communities recently providing notice that they intend to withdraw from it (RMMA's fired director, Paul Anslow, was recorded making derogatory comments about residents in areas affected by RMMA and joking about wasting taxpayer dollars on the CNR). Additionally, RMMA is currently in the process of expanding, which will just bring more noise and probably more lead. Importantly, the town of Superior and Boulder County have recently filed a lawsuit against Jefferson County the noise pollution generated by RMMA's operations.</p> <p>Colorado touts its environmentally friendly and health-focused policies. RMMA, with its endless noise, lead-spewing planes, and its general contempt for surrounding communities (and students), is a</p>
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	<p>real blight on Colorado’s record and efforts. The communities surrounding RMMA deserve better.</p>
<p>James McCarron For themselves</p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>First, yes, we do live near an airport, and we knew this when we moved to the area; however, normal air traffic does not include nonstop touch-and-go flights circling our neighborhoods. This has affected our ability to enjoy our homes, yards, and parklands in the area. The conversations in our neighborhoods have moved from normal conversations to complaining (and yelling over the noise) about the noise and how bad it has gotten in the last few years. As a scientist (ecophysiology), I study the effects of stress on ecosystems. It is interesting to see the parallels between natural succession due to increased stressors and the effects of touch-and-go flight noise on our neighborhoods; as a stressor, the pressure is resulting in a change in the community. We are seeing our neighbors leave the area because of the noise, and houses fall under corporate rental companies, resulting in a lack of responsible house ownership/maintenance. We worry about the effects of the increase in lead contamination. No one wants to live in these conditions, and we are watching Westminster slip into urban decay. Our family has started the conversation about moving. However, we see our older neighbors unable to move and their worry that our communities will sink into ruin. Jefferson County, you are making a profit at the loss of our citizens. The result will be a place no one wants to live.</p> <p>James K. McCarron, PhD.</p>
<p>Jacqueline Somma For themselves</p>	<p>We are long time residents of Jefferson County and Arvada and we are quite familiar with the anticipated noise from the Rocky Mountain Municipal Airport. This was a consideration when we had to move to the senior living community of Skyestone, located near the airport.</p> <p>However, the noise pollution from the increased flight activity at the Airport has increased significantly in the last few years and is now negatively affecting our health and quality of life.</p> <p>The majority of the noise (estimated as at least 90%) is affiliated with the pilot schools whom are highly driven to increase their number of students .. and charging the students over \$100,000 with glorified</p>

	<p>promises of future pilot jobs. The hopeful students are flying from 6 am to past 10 pm on a typical basis, with outliers carelessly flying at midnight to the pain, frustration, and irritation of the residents. The flights violate the current noise mitigations promised by the airport due to the violations in time, violations in altitude patterns, and flights that go directly over the neighborhoods. Noise complaints to the Airport have gone unanswered.</p> <p>Not only do hours extend during the entire day, the number of flights occurring at one time are 6-8 planes doing endless circles around the neighborhoods. Even as I write this letter, I hear a plane every 30 seconds. . Please imagine a person operating their noisy lawnmower around your house from 6 am to 10 pm .. and then add their 5 friends .. doing the same.</p> <p>This is the noise pollution that we are subjected to. I am in favor of normal airport operations with people happily traveling to and from their destinations. The pilot schools are responsible for 80% or more of the noise pollution . and the operation involves the endless circling of the planes at low altitudes overhead. If the neighbors dare to hold community meetings for discussions, we are hit with more flights directly after the meetings .. in seeming retaliation. We are pleading with the legislature to help the citizens. Please pass this house bill as it is a step in the correct direction.</p>
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Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Dear Chair Mullica and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

On behalf of Vertical Aviation International (VAI), representing hundreds of members in Colorado and recognized as the nation's leading vertical flight association, we express our gratitude to Rep. Brown, Bird, Fenberg, and Zenzinger for their attentive approach to addressing the concerns of the general aviation industry and continuing to collaborate with us to amend HB 1235.

Although we appreciate the bill sponsors' efforts to address the transition from leaded aviation fuels, VAI would like to highlight specific points to the Senate Finance Committee. The rotorcraft community has diligently pursued a safe and effective alternative fuel through the Eliminating Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions (EAGLE) initiative, in collaboration with the FAA, with a target for a 100LL replacement fuel by 2030. Currently, only one unleaded fuel has received FAA approval for use in all piston fixed-wing aircraft, however, the FAA has not yet approved this fuel for use in helicopters. While we expect approvals for helicopter use, the timeline remains uncertain, which could result in the grounding of a significant portion of helicopters - approximately 25% - dependent on leaded aviation fuel.

While VAI supports the transition to unleaded fuels, we advocate for a safe and responsible approach. By adhering to the FAA's 2030 timeline, we can ensure sufficient infrastructure and supply chains are in place to facilitate a safe and efficient transition. We kindly ask the committee to consider these points as you review HB 1235. Furthermore, we urge the committee to seek insights from Colorado's Division of Aeronautics regarding the state's readiness for this transition.

VAI is committed to serving as a resource to the Colorado State Legislature, offering insights and solutions that consider the concerns of all stakeholders.

We remain available for further discussion and collaboration.

Sincerely,

Vertical Aviation International

April 23, 2024

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to urge you to support Senate Finance HB24-1235, the “Reducing Aviation Impacts on Communities” bill currently pending before your committee.

I live in a neighborhood of Broomfield that is located about a mile from Rocky Metro Metropolitan Airport; it is directly impacted by operations at RMMA. Over the last five years or so, there has been a dramatic increase in training schools (mostly non-Colorado companies) and flights operating in and out of RMMA. The training flights conduct endless, repetitive “touch-and-goes” that fly directly over my neighborhood. At times, the noise is so loud that I am not able to comfortably carry on phone conversations – and this in inside with the windows closed. I dread what the summer will bring. I have sleep problems because of the noise level (as I did last summer) and know I will not be able to enjoy my own patio and the beautiful summers Colorado offers. The noise pollution is in addition to the lead being spewed by these prop planes; I am uncomfortable having my 3-year-old granddaughter visit for extended visits.

In my opinion, training schools and flights operating out of RMMA should be discontinued entirely (I know that HB24-1235 will not accomplish this but it is a good start). They present a danger to surrounding communities - a crash with serious consequences is inevitable - and the negative health consequences (both noise and lead) are unacceptable. Additionally, it is my understanding that only about 20% of students who enroll at these training schools actually finish, and that the training schools utilize predatory training practices to lure students in. To subject surrounding communities to all of the problems these schools create while they have such an abysmal record just adds to the wrongness of it all.

RMMA has proven over and over again that it is not interested in working with surrounding communities to come up with a workable solution to the noise and lead problems. Jefferson County, which owns RMMA, recently indicated it plans to eliminate the minimum standards which require airport tenants to adhere to Master Plan and Land Use. It is also my understanding that Jeffco and RMMA have made material misrepresentations in official filings, including those to the FAA. These acts, if true, are significant act of capriciousness and are evidence of Jeffco’s and RMMA’s contempt for surrounding communities. Additionally, RMMA is currently in the process of expanding, which will just bring more noise and probably more lead.

Jeffco and RMMA have long touted the formation of “Community Noise Roundtable” sessions they oversee as being responsive to the community. These sessions have been a joke. RMMA’s fired director, Paul Anslow, was recorded making derogatory comments about residents in areas affected by RMMA and joking about wasting taxpayer dollars on the CNR. Because of how ineffective and one-sided the CNR has been, several communities have given formal notice of intent to withdraw from it. Additionally, and importantly, the town of Superior and Boulder County have recently filed a lawsuit against the Jefferson County Commissioners for the noise pollution generated by RMMA’s operations.

Colorado often touts its environmentally friendly and health-focused policies. RMMA, with its endless noise, lead-spewing planes, and its general contempt for surrounding communities (and students), is a real blight on Colorado’s record and efforts. The communities surrounding RMMA deserve better.

HB24-1235 is a promising start to help protect Coloradans from noise and lead pollution, and I strongly urge you to support it.

Thank you,
Shawn McKean

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