

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

May 8, 2024

9:01 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Kevin McCabe, Chair
Representative Sarah Vance, Vice Chair
Representative Tom McKay
Representative Craig Johnson
Representative Louise Stutes
Representative Genevieve Mina

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Jesse Sumner

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29

Urging federal support for the state's aviation fuel transition.

- MOVED HJR 29 OUT OF COMMITTEE

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HJR 29

SHORT TITLE: TRANSITION FROM LEADED AVIATION FUEL

SPONSOR(S): TRANSPORTATION

05/06/24	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/06/24	(H)	TRA
05/07/24	(H)	TRA AT 1:00 PM BARNES 124
05/07/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
05/08/24	(H)	TRA AT 9:00 AM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

ACTION NARRATIVE

[9:01:39 AM](#)

CHAIR KEVIN MCCABE called the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Representatives McKay, Vance, Stutes, and McCabe were present at the call to order.

Representatives Mina and C. Johnson arrived as the meeting was in progress.

HJR 29-TRANSITION FROM LEADED AVIATION FUEL

[9:02:17 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCABE announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29, Urging federal support for the state's aviation fuel transition.

[9:02:55 AM](#)

}JULIE MORRIS, Staff* Representative Kevin McCabe* Alaska State Legislature* Juneau, Alaska* Summarized HJR 29 on behalf of Representative McCabe, prime sponsor. { on behalf of Representative McCabe, prime sponsor, summarized HJR 29 and paraphrased the sponsor statement, which read as follows:

For some background, the Environmental Protection Agency is mandating the cessation of leaded aviation fuel by 2030, driven by the FAA's "Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions" (EAGLE) program initiated in 2022.

Consequently, Alaska's Congressional Delegation requested and was granted an extension until 2034. However, recent amendments to the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act reduced it in half; this action poses a significant threat to Alaska's economy and vital transportation infrastructure, particularly within the general aviation sector. If enacted, these changes could impose financial burdens amounting to tens of millions of dollars on Alaskans and potentially devastate both commercial and private piston engine-powered aircraft operations.

Alaska's general aviation industry serves as a lifeline for thousands of residents, facilitating the transport of crucial supplies across the state's vast and remote regions. However, the lack of approved alternative fuels and an inadequate supply chain for replacement parts exacerbates the situation. Many small piston engine aircraft could face costs of up to \$100,000 per unit, rendering them economically unfeasible and jeopardizing the existence of general aviation in Alaska.

It is imperative that policymakers acknowledge the grave consequences of these amendments and take proactive measures to safeguard the interests of Alaskans and the essential services provided by the general aviation sector. Failure to do so could lead to irreparable harm to Alaska's economy and severe disruptions to essential transportation networks, affecting countless individuals statewide.

In conclusion, this Resolution underscores our commitment to protecting the life, safety, well-being and indeed the existence of Alaskans.

Your support for this resolution is greatly appreciated.

[9:04:24 AM](#)

CHAIR MCCABE invited questions from committee members.

[9:04:33 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MINA questioned the surrounding contents of the resolution and whether there was a timeline related to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

CHAIR MCCABE responded that the Senate committee on the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization was currently meeting, and he reiterated that the 2030 deadline had been granted a four-year extension.

REPRESENTATIVE MINA stated that she appreciated the focus on the burden on rural communities where transitioning to unleaded gas would have more of an impact. She asked Chair McCabe whether he was aware if the delegation was working on making those alternatives more cost neutral.

CHAIR MCCABE said that 100 low lead ("LL") was the status quo, and two fuels have been approved. He explained that to date, 35 airports nationwide have embraced the fuel, but the frustration lies with the FAA ignoring Alaska, he opined, and the state does not have a viable alternative. The FAA and manufacturers must "figure this out," he said, and he stressed the time it could take for the issue to be solved.

[9:09:31 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE STUTES pointed out that Senator Dan Sullivan addressed the issue on a YouTube video, which she recommended.

CHAIR MCCABE commented that with the greatest number of pilots and aircraft in the U.S., and dependency on pilots and aviation, the FAA should be in Alaska talking about the issues.

[9:10:42 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE related that her district is greatly impacted and relied strongly on air transit. She gave examples of statewide impacts and said that she appreciated the proposed legislation.

CHAIR MCCABE agreed and provided further examples such as hauling fuel to a village and costs going up exponentially. He noted that the other body had a companion resolution and is pushing to get it heard and into Senator Sullivan's hands.

[9:13:49 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MINA offered her belief that a transition made sense but noted the importance of transitioning to lead and the exposure especially to kids. She stressed that the body needed to know more about this correlation. She noted the Inflation Reduction Act as well as the need for more federal support.

CHAIR MCCABE gave examples of aircraft and that all must be tested with the fuel and each type of engine. He emphasized that the resolution asked the FAA for another four years for Alaska and for the FAA to pay more attention to Alaska in terms of aviation and fuel.

[9:17:58 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE VANCE moved to report HJR 29 out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, HJR 29 was reported out of the House Transportation Standing Committee.

[9:18:52 AM](#)

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Transportation Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 9:19 a.m.