



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senate votes to abolish extra pilot license fees *SB 27 removes state license fee, while continuing pilot safety services*

SALEM – The Oregon Senate passed a bill today that aims to relieve the Oregon Department of Aviation and pilots of a burdensome permitting program, saving pilots money and freeing up staff time for improved customer service.

Senate Bill 27 amends Oregon Revised Statutes to abolish state pilot registration – as well as the corresponding registration fee – in Oregon. The bill passed the Senate by a 29-0 vote. It improves efficiency by allowing existing employees to spend more time on customer service to pilots and less time collecting fees for permits. Sen. Betsy Johnson (D-Scappoose) is a former commercial helicopter pilot and has worked extensively with the Oregon Department of Aviation. She congratulates ODA on this step forward.

“This is a smart move by the Oregon Department of Aviation, because it helps them be more diligent in serving their customer base and removes a cumbersome fee program,” Johnson said. “The fees for the permit were small, but it took an inordinate amount of staff time tracking down the money. They’ve found another way to pay for important search and rescue and emergency response services that pilots rely upon and appreciate, and it frees up staff time for serving the department’s customers, the pilots.”

Oregon is among only two states that requires pilot registration. Revenue received from the fees – which is \$24 for the first year and \$48 for each subsequent biennium per pilot – is used to pay the Office of Emergency Management to search for lost planes and people; rescue lost people; and provide pilot survival education and training. Instead of relying on permit costs for those services, the Oregon Department of Aviation will rely on plane registration revenues passed in a past session to pay for those services.

According to agency testimony, the state pilot registration has low customer satisfaction and is costly to administer, and the state requirements provide no additional safety aspects beyond those already in place at the federal level.

SB 27 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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