



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO** *Office of the Mayor and City Council*

March 8, 2024

The Honorable Dave Cortese  
Chair, Senate Transportation  
California State Capitol, Room 405  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 1193 (Menjivar): Banning Leaded Airplane Fuel  
City of Palo Alto – Notice of Support**

Dear Senator Cortese,

On behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I write in support of SB 1193 (Menjivar), which would phase out the sale of leaded airplane fuel at airports in California.

Palo Alto is located near three large commercial service airports – SFO, SJC, and OAK – and is directly beneath the primary arrival paths into SFO, as well as directly beneath the primary arrival path into SJC when that airport is operating in reverse flow. Recent changes in arrival procedures into SFO have routed even more aircraft over our City, significantly impairing the health and quality of life of our residents. The City is also near several general aviation airports, including our own Palo Alto Airport, and general aviation aircraft and helicopters regularly and frequently fly over the City at low altitudes.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and studies of communities surrounding airports using leaded airplane fuel (referred to as avgas) have made it clear that avgas is not safe. In October 2023, the USEPA announced its final determination that emissions of lead from aircraft that use leaded fuel cause or contribute to air pollution that endangers public health under the Clean Air Act. A California-based study commissioned by Santa Clara County found that children who lived less than a mile away from an airport had 21% higher lead levels in their blood compared to children who lived further away.

Lower-income communities with high populations of people of color exposed to greater numbers and concentrations of environmental hazards already, including emissions from surrounding airports. Exposure to lead causes irreversible and lifelong health effects in children. Lead exposure can have harmful effects on cognitive function, including reduced IQ, decreased academic performance, as well as increased risk for additional health concerns. There is no evidence of a threshold below which there are no harmful effects on cognition from lead exposure. At least twenty-one airports in California have had legal action taken against them for their significant lead emissions.



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California should lead the way in protecting our communities against exposure to lead. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced a program in early 2022 to phase out lead from its aviation systems by 2030, and has already approved two alternative unleaded fuels.

There is no safe level of lead exposure. SB 1193 aligns state law with USEPA's determination that leaded airplane fuels endanger the lives and safety of children and public health by banning the use of leaded airplane fuel.

For these reasons, the City of Palo Alto supports SB 1193. We respectfully urge support on SB 1193 and thank the committee for the consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Greer Stone  
Mayor  
City of Palo Alto

cc: Senator Josh Becker  
Assembly Member Marc Berman