



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES  
OF CALIFORNIA

September 3, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
1021 O Street, Suite 9000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 1193 (Menjivar) – REQUEST FOR VETO**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we respectfully request your veto of Senate Bill 1193 (Menjivar). RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county.

This bill risks putting our general aviation airports, especially our rural airports, under the pressure of closure if they are unable to comply with its mandate by the date specified. The bill directs all California general aviation airports to phase out the sale of low-leaded aviation gas by 2031. Low-leaded 100-octane gasoline is the current approved and regulated standard for all piston engine aircraft, airplanes and rotor craft (helicopters) both. While our member county airports and their pilots would prefer using an unleaded 100-octane alternative, as the fuel results in better performance and reduced maintenance for aircraft, as well as is safer for all parties involved in its handling and use, unfortunately a 100-octane unleaded alternative does not currently exist on the market. Fuels makers continue to investigate possible formulations that meet market, safety, and environmental standards. However, contrary to some claims otherwise, no market alternative available to all of California's general aviation airports currently exists. If this mandate were required in law today, under the inaccurate contention that a 100-octane unleaded alternative exists and is freely available, the vast majority of airports would have to shut down their fuel sales for lack of options and supplies. Even the general aviation airports within the California county sponsoring this legislation are not selling a 100-octane unleaded fuel at this time, despite several promises over the course of months to the Legislature that the switch was imminent.

1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814 | [www.rcrcnet.org](http://www.rcrcnet.org) | 916.447.4806 | Fax: 916.448.3154

ALPINE · AMADOR · BUTTE · CALAVERAS · COLUSA · DEL NORTE · EL DORADO · GLENN · HUMBOLDT · IMPERIAL · INYO · KINGS · LAKE · LASSEN  
MADERA · MARIPOSA · MENDOCINO · MERCED · MODOC · MONO · MONTEREY · NAPA · NEVADA · PLACER · PLUMAS · SAN BENITO · SAN LUIS OBISPO  
SANTA BARBARA · SHASTA · SIERRA · SISKIYOU · SOLANO · SONOMA · SUTTER · TEHAMA · TRINITY · TULARE · TUOLUMNE · YOLO · YUBA

What makes this bill even more challenging to California airports, an airport authority that does not comply with federal grant conditions is subject to the loss of federal grant funds, which are essential to airports to stay operable, as well as a \$5000 a day civil penalty.<sup>1</sup> And current federal grant conditions prohibit airports from switching to a 100-UL alternative before the Federal Aviation Administration signs off the switch. While the Congressional prohibition in question expires after 2029, Congress has clearly expressed its intent that airports not go it alone unless and until an alternative is federally sanctioned. If an alternative is \*still\* not identified, tested, and established as safe by 2029, it is fairly certain that Congress will reassert their prohibition on states moving before federal safety regulators allow.

While we greatly hope that a current FAA-industry collaborative, EAGLE<sup>2</sup>, is able to successfully identify a replacement standard on or before 2030, we believe that this bill prematurely assumes that a safe and approved alternative will exist in time for its strict deadline. But if it is unable to identify such an alternative, we think this bill creates an unnecessary conflict that could be highly costly and disruptive to California airports, especially the rural general aviation airports that communities and officials rely on as throughputs for commerce, access, recreation, and emergency response and evacuation. Shutting down these airports for their inability to switch to a fuel that currently is not available on the market and that has not been proven safe to regulators does not seem like a sensible approach. Running future legislation delay this deadline if needed, while touted by the author as easily done, may not be as easily achieved under a number of scenarios.

For these reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your veto of Senate Bill 1193 (Menjivar). Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806 or [snag@rcrcnet.org](mailto:snag@rcrcnet.org) if you have questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,



Siddharth Nag  
Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Caroline Menjivar, Member of the California State Senate

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 Final Section-by-Section analysis (H.R. 3935), p. 50

<sup>2</sup> FAA “Eliminate Aviation Gasoline Lead Emissions (EAGLE).” Found at [www.faa.gov/unleaded](http://www.faa.gov/unleaded)