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HOUSE BILL 1397

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State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Representatives Slatter, Dent, Fey, Orcutt, Kloba, Valdez, Wylie, Pollet, Fitzgibbon, Tharinger, Morris, Eslick, Doglio, and Ortiz-Self

Read first time 01/21/19. Referred to Committee on Transportation.

1 AN ACT Relating to encouraging the use of electric or hybrid-  
2 electric aircraft for regional air travel; amending RCW 47.68.070;  
3 adding a new section to chapter 47.68 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that the  
6 prospect of transitioning from aircraft powered by burning fuel to  
7 aircraft powered at least partially by electrical propulsion promises  
8 a variety of economic, social, and environmental benefits, including:

9 (a) Reduced fuel costs that make expanded commercial service of  
10 smaller regional airports economically viable;

11 (b) Support for the type of dispersed and rural economic  
12 development already envisioned elsewhere in state policy, including  
13 through the state's participation in the western regional short-haul  
14 air transportation compact under chapter 81.96 RCW or similar types  
15 of multistate collaborative forums that currently exist through the  
16 northwest region national association of state aviation officials;

17 (c) Reduced traffic on state roads as a result of short-haul  
18 flights becoming price competitive with driving;

19 (d) A redistribution of air traffic from overly busy hubs to  
20 airports dispersed across the state that would otherwise operate  
21 below capacity;

1 (e) Reduced greenhouse gas emissions from aircraft fuel use;

2 (f) Reduced impacts on communities located adjacent to busy  
3 airport hubs from decreases in aircraft noise and emissions of  
4 conventional air pollutants; and

5 (g) Support the expansion of aerospace manufacturing.

6 (2) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to continue  
7 Washington's leading role in the aerospace industry by encouraging  
8 the development and adoption of aircraft whose propulsion is fully or  
9 partially powered by electricity.

10 (3) It is also the intent of the legislature for the department  
11 of transportation to reconvene the electric aircraft work group  
12 initially created in the 2018 transportation budget to continue to  
13 study the state of the electrically powered aircraft industry and  
14 assess infrastructure needs related to the deployment of electric or  
15 hybrid-electric aircraft for commercial air travel in Washington  
16 state.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 47.68  
18 RCW to read as follows:

19 (1) The department must convene a work group to study the state  
20 of the electrically powered aircraft industry and assess  
21 infrastructure needs related to the deployment of electric or hybrid-  
22 electric aircraft for commercial air travel in Washington state.

23 (2) The chair of the work group may be a consultant specializing  
24 in aeronautics. The work group must include, but is not limited to,  
25 representation from the electric aircraft industry, the aircraft  
26 manufacturing industry, electric utility districts, the battery  
27 industry, the department of commerce, the department of  
28 transportation aviation division, the airline pilots association, a  
29 primary airport representing an airport association, and the airline  
30 industry. The work group may include other members at the discretion  
31 of the department.

32 (3) The study must include, but is not limited to:

33 (a) Infrastructure requirements necessary to facilitate electric  
34 aircraft operations at airports;

35 (b) Potential economic and public benefits including, but not  
36 limited to, the direct and indirect impact on the number of  
37 manufacturing and service jobs and the wages from those jobs in  
38 Washington state;

1 (c) Potential incentives for industry in the manufacturing and  
2 operation of electric aircraft for regional air travel;

3 (d) Educational and workforce requirements for manufacturing and  
4 maintaining electric aircraft;

5 (e) Demand and forecast for electric aircraft use to include  
6 expected timeline of the aircraft entering the market given federal  
7 aviation administration certification requirements;

8 (f) Identification of up to six airports in Washington state that  
9 may benefit from a pilot program once an electrically propelled  
10 aircraft for commercial use becomes available; and

11 (g) Recommendations to further the advancement of the  
12 electrification of aircraft for regional commercial use within  
13 Washington state, including specific, measurable goals for the years  
14 2030, 2040, and 2050 that reflect progressive and substantial  
15 increases in the utilization of electric and hybrid-electric  
16 commercial aircraft.

17 (4) The work group must submit a report and accompanying  
18 recommendations to the transportation committees of the legislature  
19 by November 15, 2020. By February 15, 2021, and every two years  
20 thereafter, the department must provide a progress report on any  
21 efforts to implement the recommendations to the transportation  
22 committees of the legislature consistent with RCW 43.01.036.

23 **Sec. 3.** RCW 47.68.070 and 1984 c 7 s 344 are each amended to  
24 read as follows:

25 The department has general supervision over aeronautics within  
26 this state. It is empowered and directed to encourage, foster, and  
27 assist in the development and sustainment of aeronautics in this  
28 state, including aeronautics involving electrically powered aircraft,  
29 and to encourage the establishment of airports and air navigation  
30 facilities. It shall cooperate with and assist the federal  
31 government, the municipalities of this state, and other persons in  
32 the development of aeronautics, including aeronautics involving  
33 electrically powered aircraft, and shall seek to coordinate the  
34 aeronautical activities of these bodies and persons. Municipalities  
35 are authorized to cooperate with the department in the development of  
36 aeronautics and aeronautical facilities in this state.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    This act may be known and cited as the  
2 linking communities by encouraging regional aircraft electrification  
3 act or LINK-AIR act.

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