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July 29, 2022

# Earthjustice praises Congressional oversight of lead in aviation fuel

Most lead air pollution in the country comes from piston-engine aircrafts

## CONTACTS

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — This week, the House Oversight Subcommittee on the Environment held a [hearing on the hazards of leaded aviation fuel](#) and the imminent need to phase out its use. The Subcommittee heard from multiple witnesses and experts on the urgency and feasibility of phasing out leaded aviation gas. Despite [multiple attempts to compel participation](#), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) notably declined to participate.

At yesterday's hearing, Swift Fuels Chief Executive Officer Chris D'Acosta projected that their drop-in replacement fuel will be ready for use by all piston-engine aircrafts in three years — well under the [FAA's recently projected 2030 timeline](#) for development and approval of an unleaded replacement fuel. FAA must act more expeditiously or else continue to allow communities to suffer from the life-altering impacts of lead exposure. Earlier this year, EPA committed to proposing an endangerment finding on leaded aviation fuel after [more than a decade of petitioning](#) by community groups represented by Earthjustice. Earthjustice urges EPA to hold to their timeline and ensure no delays in proposing an endangerment finding by the end of this calendar year.

"Lead is not only a legacy issue in the pipes and paint in our homes, it is in the air we breathe," **said Earthjustice associate legislative representative Nathan Park.**

"Earthjustice applauds the Subcommittee and Chairman Khanna for bringing greater attention to the continued use of leaded aviation fuel and the ongoing lead

poisoning crisis. We are grateful to the members of the Oversight Subcommittee for elevating this important issue and urge FAA and EPA to protect families and children by banning the use of leaded aviation fuel.”

While the use of leaded gasoline in most motor vehicles was banned 25 years ago, [leaded aviation fuel is used in nearly 170,000 piston-engine aircrafts across 20,000 airports](#) and is the last major unregulated source of airborne lead emissions, accounting for about 70% of lead released into the atmosphere by EPA's own account. Over 5 million people, including [more than 360,000 children under the age of 5, live near at least one of these airports](#).

There is no safe level of lead. Multiple studies have shown that children who live near airports have higher levels of lead in their blood. Children are particularly vulnerable as children absorb four to five times more lead than adults, and at the lowest levels experience physical, cognitive, and neurobehavioral impairments. [General aviation airports with the highest lead emissions are in communities of color](#).

[Watch the House Oversight Subcommittee’s hearing.](#)

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## ABOUT EARTHJUSTICE

Earthjustice is the premier nonprofit environmental law organization. We wield the power of law and the strength of partnership to protect people’s health, to preserve magnificent places and wildlife, to advance clean energy, and to combat climate change. We are here because the earth needs a good lawyer.

*“He sort of MacGyvered the system.”*