

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM THE HARMFUL EFFECTS OF AIRCRAFT EMISSIONS

Adopted by Convention Delegates May 7, 1998

*Reviewed and deemed relevant November 2017*

- WHEREAS,** It is in the interest of the California State PTA to ensure that each student in California schools is provided a safe and positive school climate and that the communities in which students live are free from avoidable health hazards; and
- WHEREAS,** Children who attend California schools and who live in communities near airports may be subjected to airport and/or aircraft emissions which inhibit safe and positive school climates and which create avoidable health hazards; and
- WHEREAS,** Studies show that aircraft exhaust emissions can cause severe health problems for children in particular, including respiratory ailments and cancer, and that air traffic will significantly increase over the next decade; and
- WHEREAS,** Although airports and aircraft can be considerable sources of toxic pollution, airports are not required to report their toxic emissions nor are airports subject to the restrictive requirements of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 even though local attempts to control airport emissions are pre-empted by federal law; and
- WHEREAS,** The Federal Aviation Administration has jurisdiction over essentially all critical aspects of U.S. aviation; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA and its units, councils and districts encourage additional study to determine the extent to which children in California schools and communities are harmed by toxic emissions from the operation of aircraft, especially in and around airports; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That for those schools and communities for which it is determined that children are particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of toxic emissions from the operation of aircraft, especially in and around airports, the California State PTA and its units, councils and districts urge the appropriate agencies to initiate immediate remedial steps to ensure the protection of school children from these harmful effects; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA support legislation that places responsibility for monitoring and controlling toxic emissions from the operation of aircraft, especially in and around airports, with the Environmental Protection Agency; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** That the California State PTA forward this resolution to the National PTA for consideration by the delegates at the National PTA convention.

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## **BACKGROUND SUMMARY**

Studies show that airports and aircraft emissions are major sources of air pollution. Airports use highly toxic substances to support aviation operations and jet aircraft exhaust adds significantly to reduced air quality. Many airport and aircraft operations are, therefore, harmful to children who attend school and live near airports and near the traffic lanes used by aircraft. Because of recent increases in air traffic, and further projected increases, most of the major airports in California have recently expanded or will significantly expand in the near future. Children who attend school and live in areas near airports may be exposed to harmful levels of toxic emissions. It is necessary to promptly find out how exposed these children are by asking the appropriate agencies to assess the impact of toxic aircraft emissions on them.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is the federal agency which is primarily responsible for establishing safety standards for airports and aircraft, and for overseeing virtually all aspects of aviation throughout the United States. However, airports and aircraft are not subject to the pollution reporting requirements identified in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. This allowed the aviation industry to continue polluting at relatively high levels, and the aviation industry's "contribution" to air pollution is expected to increase with projected air traffic increases. Logically, oversight responsibilities concerning the emissions from airports and aircraft belong with the Environmental Protection Agency rather than with the FAA. Legislation that will accomplish this goal must be supported by our political leaders.