

## FAA Reauthorization

**The Issue:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act, which authorizes the FAA and other programs critical to airports and the aviation industry, will play a crucial role this year as the multi-year bill expires on Sept. 30, 2023. The Department of Transportation (DOT) has noted that propane is an "easily available fuel"<sup>1</sup> already used at numerous airports. The use of propane at airports can reduce emissions by 52%, NOx by 53%, and SOx by 89% compared to an equivalent all-electric system<sup>2</sup>. Using propane for ground support vehicles can help airports reach their emission goals by replacing gas and diesel vehicles. Additionally, propane can be used in power generation, which can help bolster resiliency efforts at airports.

**Background:** As airports looked to lower emissions and improve air quality, Congress created federal programs like the Voluntary Airport Low Emission (VALE) Program to help finance low-emission vehicles and refueling stations at airports.

DOT lists propane as an eligible fuel for the VALE Program as it not only lowers emissions but can extend an engine's life and requires less oil than conventional fuels. In addition to the maintenance savings, the cost and infrastructure of propane are available at a fraction of the cost compared to electric alternatives. For example, installing infrastructure for ten propane vehicles with a single 1,000- to a 2,000-gallon tank can cost up to \$60,000, while installing infrastructure for ten electric vehicles with five level 3 fast EV chargers is up to \$480,000. Unlike propane fueling infrastructure, electric infrastructure will likely have additional costs for items like electric sub-panels, added amperage to power multiple stations, and upgrading and replacing incoming power lines. By utilizing propane in the VALE Program, airports can reduce costs and provide low-emission advantages to reach airports' low-emission goals.

In addition to lowering emissions, propane-powered generators provide resiliency at airports by decreasing their reliance on the electric grid. Passengers, staff, and security have already been affected by multiple airport power disruptions in 2023. Due to these disruptions, numerous flights have been delayed or rescheduled. By utilizing propane for power generation, airports will be more resilient against power outages, improve efficiencies, and decrease passenger disruptions.

To provide more reliability and efficiency of an airport's power supply, federal programs like the Energy Supply, Redundancy and Microgrids help finance power generation and prevent power disruptions. Unlike diesel or gasoline, propane is non-toxic, highly transportable, and unsusceptible to degradation, making propane an ideal fuel for power generation in all environments. As part of the Energy Supply, Redundancy, and Microgrids Program, propane can enhance these goals that the Administrator outlined in 2021 by providing low emission-cost-efficient power generation to airports nationwide.

**The Ask:** NPGA requests that during FAA reauthorization, Congress continue to make propane applications eligible under the VALE program and the Energy Supply, Redundancy and Microgrids Program. These programs ensure propane can provide economic, environmental, and resilience benefits to airports across the country.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tc.faa.gov/its/worldpac/techrpt/tc14-22.pdf#page=27>

<sup>2</sup> Gas Technology Institute. (17-01). GHG and Criteria Pollutant Emissions Analysis (GTI PROJECT NUMBER 22061). Propane Education & Research Council.