

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 715

BY REPRESENTATIVE DESHOTEL

AIRCRAFT/AVIATION: Requires aerial applicators to carry radios and transponders while using a publicly owned airport or landing field

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 2:135.3(Section heading), (A), and (B), relative to aerial
3 applicators; to require aerial applicators to operate federally compliant transponders
4 and two-way radios when using publicly owned airports or participating in airport
5 priority programs; to prohibit political subdivisions from discriminating against
6 licensed aerial applicators using public airports; to provide for inspection and
7 enforcement by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry; to provide for aerial
8 applicators at non-towered airports; to provide for public safety and coordination of
9 airport operations; to provide for limitations; and to provide for related matters.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 2:135.3(Section heading), (A), and (B) are hereby amended and
12 reenacted to read as follows:

13 §135.3. Aerial applicators; ~~discrimination prohibited; conditions for use of public~~
14 airports

15 A.(1) No city, town, or other political subdivision of this state which
16 establishes airports or landing fields, or which acquires, leases, or sets apart real
17 property for such purposes shall use any aspect of its authority to discriminate
18 against the use of such airports or landing fields by any aerial applicator
19 appropriately licensed by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry for aerial
20 application of seeds, fertilizers, or ~~pesticides provided~~ pesticides, provided that such

1 aerial applicator complies with all regulations as may be promulgated by the airport
2 owner or operator or the Department of Transportation and Development for the
3 furtherance of flying safety and protection of the airport environs.

4 ~~B.~~ (2) In the event that any airport authority objects to the use of its facilities
5 by a licensed aerial applicator, the office of agricultural and environmental sciences
6 of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry shall upon request send a
7 representative to inspect and monitor the field prior to, during, and after the use by
8 the aerial applicator to ascertain if any harmful chemicals and other residues remain
9 as a result of the use by the aerial applicator. If the commissioner of the Department
10 of Agriculture and Forestry determines that the applicator is or has been in violation,
11 the commissioner shall have the authority to suspend the offending applicator from
12 further use of the airport or landing strip.

13 B.(1) As a condition of using a publicly owned airport or landing field within
14 this state, or participation in an airport priority program, any aerial applicator
15 licensed by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry shall operate a functioning
16 aircraft transponder consistent with applicable federal aviation regulations, including
17 but not limited to an Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B Out)
18 system compliant with 14 CFR Part 91.225 or a Mode C transponder compliant with
19 14 CFR Part 91.215, and an operable two-way radio capable of communicating with
20 airport traffic or advisory services when such services are available.

21 (2) The requirements of this Subsection shall apply solely during the
22 operation of an aircraft in connection with takeoff from or landing at a public airport
23 or landing field for the purpose of public safety and coordination of airport surface
24 and traffic operations.

25 (3) An aerial applicator operating at a publicly owned airport or landing field
26 within this state that does not have an operating control tower shall follow the
27 standard traffic pattern as recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration,
28 unless any of the following occurs:

29 (a) Safety considerations require deviation.

Proposed law prohibits any airport authority, political subdivision, or publicly owned airport or landing field from using data derived from an aircraft transponder, including but not limited to ADS-B data, to assess, calculate, or collect any fee, charge, penalty or other revenue, or to enforce any local ordinance unrelated to safety.

(Amends R.S. 2:135.3(Section heading), (A), and (B))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Add a provision to prohibit any airport authority, political subdivision, or publicly owned airport or landing field from using aircraft transponder data to impose fees or enforce any local ordinance unrelated to safety.
2. Make technical changes.