

- SUBJECT:** Permitting certain aircraft to operate in protected freshwater areas
- COMMITTEE:** Culture, Recreation and Tourism — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — K. King, Gervin-Hawkins, Burns, Clardy, Israel, Krause, Martinez, C. Morales
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Frullo
- WITNESSES:** For — Tres Clinton, Recreational Aviation Foundation; (*Registered, but did not testify*: David Sinclair, Game Warden Peace Officers Association)
- Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Parks and Wildlife Code ch. 90 defines which vehicles, under certain conditions, are permitted to access protected freshwater areas.
- Some have suggested that because public lands are limited, permitting aircraft to land in or on protected freshwater areas would increase access to outdoor activities and that most aircraft operators seek to land on sandbars and gravel bars along bodies of water where there would be minimal disturbance to vegetation and habitat.
- DIGEST:** HB 4436 would allow aircraft, including airplanes, ultralight airplanes or helicopters, to be operated in or on protected freshwater areas. The person who operated an aircraft would have to do so in a manner that avoided, to the extent reasonably possible, harming or disturbing vegetation, wildlife and habitat within the protected freshwater area.
- The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021.