

### Rep. Suozzi Quiet Skies Testimony

- Good Afternoon Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member David Price and fellow Members of the Subcommittee.
- Thank you for the time to discuss a critical issue to so many of our constituents: unacceptable levels of aircraft noise.
- At the beginning of my first term in Congress, I was elected co-Chair of the Quiet Skies Caucus, along with Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. We're fortunate to have Congressmen Quigley and Lynch serve as co-Vice Chairs of the caucus.
- I represent New York's Third Congressional district – stretching from northeast Queens along Long Island's north shore, through Nassau County and into Suffolk County.
- LaGuardia and JFK, two of the nation's busiest airports, both rely on flight paths over numerous neighborhoods in and around my district.
- I became Co-Chair of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus because my constituents are sick and tired of noise pollution from airplanes and low-flying helicopters at all hours of the day and night.
- It's a fact that noise pollution deteriorates quality of life and negatively affects health. It drives down property values as well.
- The FAA has given us their commitments to study flight patterns, conduct health surveys, create a central complaint system and enhance community outreach.
- Yet, it is unclear when the FAA's work will come to fruition and many of my constituents are frustrated and angry. They're also worried this problem is going to get much worse as local airports expand their capacity.
- I have spoken to my other colleagues on the Caucus; their constituents are literally shouting similar concerns.
- To address these critical issues, The Quiet Skies Caucus asks the Subcommittee to include funding for the FAA to study the health impacts of airplane flights on residents exposed to a wide range of noise and air pollution levels.

- We also ask the Subcommittee to include report language that directs the FAA to evaluate alternative metrics to the current Day Night Level (DNL) 65 standard, such as the use of noise sampling and other methods.
- Why is the DNL important? Because it was developed over 10 years ago and is outdated.
- It expresses an average noise level based on annual aircraft operations for an entire calendar year.
- It does not capture the devastating effects of NextGen over our communities.
- What does it matter if planes are flying at a supposedly acceptable 65 DNL, if they're roaring past every 60 seconds overhead?

My final request of the Subcommittee today is specific to my home district of New York-3.

- Thousands of my constituents in Northeast Queens are being bombarded by helicopter noise daily.
- Helicopter noise pollution is an environmental hazard that negatively impacts the health and well-being of Queens and Long Island residents.
- In July 2016, the FAA ruled to keep a Helicopter route over the North Shore of Long Island active through August of 2020.
- An unacceptable byproduct of this North Shore Route is greater helicopter traffic over Northeast Queens which forces area residents to suffer constant helicopter noise pollution.
- I urge the subcommittee to include in the FY19 appropriations bill language that would direct a review of regulations around helicopter noise and assess:
  - 1) The noise impacts of the regulations for communities, including communities in locations where aircraft are landing or taking off
  - 2) Enforcement of applicable flight standards, including requirements for helicopters to remain at or below 2,500 feet mean sea level
  - 3) Availability of new routes to reduce noise impacts, including the institution of an all water route over northeast Queens County, New York
- Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

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