

Good morning Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to be with you today and share perspective on progress and tools towards addressing community aviation noise concerns. My name is Emily Tranter and I am the Executive Director of The National Organization to Insure a Sound-Controlled Environment (N.O.I.S.E.).

N.O.I.S.E. is the country's oldest advocacy organization representing a community perspective on aviation noise impacts. Our organization is comprised of elected officials from all over the United States, all directly impacted by aviation noise and operations. Our board alone represents communities adjacent to major airports in Minneapolis, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Louisville, Kentucky and the Denver area.

N.O.I.S.E. Executive Board:

PRESIDENT

The Honorable Brad Pierce
Council Member
City of Aurora, CO

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

The Honorable Mary Rose Evans
Commissioner
City of Parkway Village, KY

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

The Honorable Ambrose Clay
Council Member
College Park, GA

TREASURER

The Honorable Libby Garvey
County Board Member
Arlington County, VA

SECRETARY

The Honorable Linea Palmisano
Council Member
Minneapolis, MN

As you know, the NextGen system puts new tracks into place that are designed not to move or deviate--essentially creating infrastructure in the sky. To successfully address noise impact concerns--it is important to design those tracks to be sustainable so that they will be acceptable to the FAA and community for the long term. Implementation of NextGen and its many technological advancements for the air traffic system, deserves the same due diligence and community input as any other major transportation system on the ground would warrant.

As you know, NextGen establishes flight tracks that become part of a complex and growing network of tracks and procedures. For the efficiency of NextGen implementation, the tracks should be designed to be stable and sustainable long-term. To that end, it's important to design tracks that will be acceptable to the FAA and community. NextGen is a transformational infrastructure investment and deserves the same due diligence and community input as any other major transportation system on the ground would warrant. As well as ensuring that this infrastructure does not cause undue harm.

To be clear, we do not represent every impacted community, interest or perspective on this issue, however our organization's engagement for nearly half a century, provides a unique perspective that we believe will give the Committee background on meaningful ways that have --and can continue to-- measure the progress of addressing community concerns related to aviation noise.

First, it is clear that there is no silver bullet when it comes to addressing aviation noise impacts. In our experience, Congress and the FAA have made dedicated strides toward focusing on community engagement over the last decade, however, much progress still needs to be made. These efforts include the FAA creating an office of community engagement in the Air Traffic Organization and engaging directly with airport roundtables. It also includes individual Members and this Committee responding to constituent concerns through legislative action, funding the study of noise metrics, and by creating the Quiet Skies Caucus.

While these actions are meaningful, many of the most impactful changes to noise have come from the bottom up-or airport level- rather than from top-down policy changes. Understanding local dynamics is vital towards finding and implementing meaningful solutions. That is to say—when you've seen one airport, you've seen one airport-and a one-sized fix does not fit all.

Early and frequent communication by the FAA, the airport and other industry stakeholders with the impacted communities—through a roundtable-or by other public means is, in our experience, key toward community awareness, engagement and understanding of noise changes. Even changes that do not require environmental review should be paired with robust community outreach far ahead of any planned changes to the airspace that could impact noise—

In many cases, educating and engaging the elected officials can help provide an important bridge to constituents. In others, where roundtables may be comprised of both elected and non-elected officials- direct engagement and consistent communication with those bodies is key. The engagement of local FAA personnel who understand the community and operations has also proven valuable in many cases.

Where we have seen the most progress, even if seemingly incremental, has been in communities where tailored engagement has been put into place.

Outside of the NEPA process, transparent and robust communication can save time and avoid unnecessary hurdles caused by community push back when unexpected changes occur.
Airports and the communities they serve

It's important to recognize that there is a relationship between an airport and the surrounding and when each is doing well, they bolster the success of the other. Thriving communities are places where a dependable workforce want to live, and where people want to do business or visit. The airport is an asset to a community, but a thriving community is also an asset to the airport. Designing tracks that respect the communities they impact, and do not unintentionally cause harm, will foster this mutually-beneficial partnership.

Investment in this partnership creates the foundation for sustainable outcomes and long-term success.