

Rep. Jason Crow (CO-06) Submitted Remarks for Member Day Hearing

Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:

Thank you for holding this forum for Members to share with the committee their priorities and concerns regarding the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

I proudly represent Colorado's 6th Congressional district, and I am one of the many Members of Congress who have joined the Quiet Skies Caucus.

My district is home to Centennial Airport, which is the United States' second busiest general aviation airport. The FAA has been entrusted with ensuring aviation safety, and aviation safety is a serious concern for residents in my district who live below the flight path. We had a mid-air collision near Centennial Airport in 2021. Community members remain deeply concerned about subsequent changes at the airport and any future accident that could endanger both those in the air and on the ground.

Many of my constituents have serious concerns about the impact that concentrated flights have on their homes, children, community, and health. To start, residents are concerned about health risks, particularly to children and pregnant women, from exposure to high levels of lead from aviation fuel emissions. Additionally, residents are pained by the frequent, high-decibel noise from planes overhead that disrupt their homes, schools, and parks. Residents' mental health and way of life are being impacted. On multiple occasions since 2022, constituents have expressed to my staff that the constant disruption is intolerable and makes their homes feel virtually unlivable.

Far too often the FAA and others have dismissed their concerns or not given them their full attention. The FAA needs to be more responsive to community concerns in concert with local officials, and I ask the committee to seriously consider new mandates. At the Centennial Airport, a Noise Roundtable has been established, and a Noise Abatement Guide exists. Local public officials, the Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority, and residents are working with the FAA; however, the FAA has not always attended meetings, and we should require a better response from them to address community concerns.

Recently, Chair of the Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners Warren-Gully, Greenwood Village Mayor Lantz, Arapahoe County Public Airport Authority Chair Bagnato, and Centennial Airport Noise Roundtable Chair Peirce requested greater local control to address aircraft noise issues. They have specifically requested that the FAA be required to take both safety and noise abatement into account when working in concert with local airports and communities. In addition, they are seeking the assignment of FAA technical experts to the newly created Sub-Roundtable Technical Working Group and regular participation with community groups, the Centennial Airport Community Noise Roundtable (CACNR), and the airport. They have further requested the creation of new financial incentives to accelerate the production and distribution of alternative unleaded fuels.

As you proceed with the reauthorization of the FAA, I ask that any new legislation addresses the concerns of communities on the ground, who endure the consequences of inaction every single day. There must be stronger requirements to address the noise, environment, health, and safety issues impacting those underneath flight paths. Additionally, I request that the committee include meaningful requirements that will accelerate the transition away from leaded aviation fuel to safer, more environmentally-conscious alternatives.

I and members of the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus have repeatedly made requests for changes at the FAA, and it is time for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to make meaningful changes to the FAA's authorizing statute that requires greater protection of the health and safety of families in my district and around the country.