

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2012

Hon. Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are writing to respectfully request the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) begin the process of formally soliciting local stakeholder views on helicopter noise in Los Angeles County, California in order to more quickly develop solutions to this ongoing problem. As cosponsors of legislation currently pending in the House and Senate, respectively, which would mandate the FAA issue regulations pertaining to helicopter noise, we believe the FAA should expeditiously undertake an examination of potential remedies to the longstanding problem of helicopter noise in residential areas of Los Angeles.

We also note that pending report language included in the Fiscal Year 2013 Senate Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill would direct the FAA to solicit the views of interested parties, including representatives of local communities, regarding helicopter noise and safety issues in Los Angeles County. The Senate Committee on Appropriations directed the FAA "to lead a collaborative effort ... to (1) identify specific concerns with helicopter operations, including noise; (2) evaluate options that would respond to identified concerns including, but not limited to routes, operating altitudes, and hovering practices; and (3) develop solutions to the identified issues consistent with FAA's statutory responsibilities." Given longstanding concerns about helicopter noise expressed by our constituents, we urge you to begin the consultative process as referenced in the Senate Appropriations Committee report without delay.

We would also like to reiterate our firm belief that while consultations and reporting requirements are an important step forward, they are no replacement for meaningful action by the FAA to address the legitimate noise concerns expressed by our constituents in the Los Angeles area. While we understand the complexities involved in developing solutions to the problem of helicopter noise in Los Angeles, we note that previous efforts to address other air traffic-related noise concerns in the region were ultimately deferred

as a result of repeated and costly studies. We strongly feel that FAA's leadership must lead to meaningful action to reduce helicopter noise.

We look forward to working with you and the FAA to develop a more detailed outline and scope for these consultations, and are pleased to invite the FAA to hear first hand from our constituents their concerns and solutions to the helicopter noise problem in the Los Angeles area. We look forward to hearing your response to our request.

Sincerely,


HOWARD L. BERMAN
Member of Congress


DIANNE FEINSTEIN
U.S. Senator


BARBARA BOXER
U.S. Senator


HENRY WAXMAN
Member of Congress


ADAM SCHIFF
Member of Congress


BRAD SHERMAN
Member of Congress


JANICE HAHN
Member of Congress

cc: FAA Acting Administrator Michael Huerta