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**Grace Meng**

**Congress of the United States**

**Sixth District, New York**

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October 15, 2021

Executive Director Rick Cotton  
The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey  
4 World Trade Center  
150 Greenwich Street  
New York City, NY, 10007

Dear Executive Director Cotton,

As a founding member of the Quiet Skies Caucus and the Representative of New York's sixth congressional district, which borders LaGuardia Airport, I write in response to the recently published "LaGuardia Airport Draft Noise Compatibility Program." While I am optimistic about the proposed noise abatement measures outlined in this draft, I believe the plan does not go far enough to improve the quality of life of the Queens residents affected by airplane noise. I respectfully urge you to consider including the following recommendations in the final draft:

1. Increased flight disbursement utilizing a combination of flight procedures.
2. Noise Abatement Departure Procedure 1 (NADP1) on Runway 13.
3. Reduced usage of Runway 13 departures.
4. Nighttime optimized profile descent procedures.
5. Expand the sound-insulation of eligible residential units to include residences outside of the DNL 65 contours.
6. Include communities exposed to noise levels below DNL 65 in the scope of the study.
7. Air Traffic Controller noise sensitivity training and management oversight.

Airplane noise pollution is not merely an annoyance or inconvenience for many of my constituents. While it certainly does affect their property values and comfort, high levels of noise pollution have direct effects on their health as well. Data and studies conducted over decades confirm that noise pollution is a public health problem.<sup>1</sup> I respectfully urge you to take these concerns seriously and hope that you consider the above measures.

I am concerned that the implementation of measures related to Runway 13 would take up to three years. Being within the contours of DNL 65, it is unacceptable to expect Flushing residents to endure those noise levels for any longer, as current airplane noise exposure is negatively

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<sup>1</sup> Basner, M., Clark, C., Hansell, A., Hileman, J. I., Janssen, S., Shepherd, K., & Sparrow, V. (2017). Aviation Noise Impacts: State of the Science. *Noise & health*, 19(87), 41–50. [https://doi.org/10.4103/nah.NAH\\_104\\_16](https://doi.org/10.4103/nah.NAH_104_16)

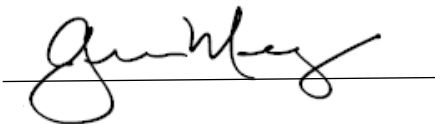
impacting their health and wellbeing. While I applaud the improvements to the community that these abatement measures would make in Flushing, I ask that you consider expediting their development process.

It is in my opinion that the draft also broadly ignores the difficulties faced by households within the 55 DNL to 65 DNL contours. Many find themselves living under a “noise” corridor who would immediately benefit from increased flight disbursement using a combination of the TNNIS, GLDMN, NTHNS, and Whitestone Climb. My constituents in neighborhoods as far as nine miles from LaGuardia Airport are reporting migraines, stress, and trouble sleeping brought on by the persistent airplane noise. I am disappointed that the draft has chosen to limit its scope to the strict FAA standard. In light of substantial evidence that 55 DNL is sufficient to cause adverse health effects, I recommend the draft be revised to include these communities in its analysis and relief plans.

While I believe the draft proposal falls short in several regards, I was glad to see a proposal to sound-insulate eligible residential units to improve the noise level reduction of structures by at least 5 decibels (dB). I recommend this proposal be extended to residents in the 55 to 65 DNL range. A study of this policy – sound insulation for noise level reduction around LaGuardia Airport – determined that “changing the regulatory standard for noise exposure around airports from 65 dB to 55 dB comes at a very good value.”<sup>2</sup> While I understand this would incur an additional cost to the FAA and Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, it is my belief that the benefits of reducing airplane noise pollution by even 5 decibels outweigh the expected increase in costs.

I hope to see the proposals in this draft improved upon and implemented as quickly as possible, as airplane noise continues to take a physical and emotional toll on my constituents. I look forward to working with the FAA, the Port Authority New York and New Jersey, and relevant communities to implement viable solutions for reducing the burden of airplane noise. I appreciate your giving my concerns your full and fair consideration, consistent with applicable statutes and regulations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grace Meng', is written over a horizontal line.

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress

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<sup>2</sup> Jiao, B., Zafari, Z., Will, B., Ruggeri, K., Li, S., & Muennig, P. (2017). The Cost-Effectiveness of Lowering Permissible Noise Levels Around U.S. Airports. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(12), 1497. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14121497>