



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

## Opposing the FAA's Elimination of Airspace Safety Rules

THOMAS K. DUANE October 11, 2011

I was outraged to read in the October 10, 2011 *New York Post* that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) had eliminated important safety rules regarding airspace for helicopters and private planes without any public notification. That same day, I joined New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn and New York State Assemblymember Dick Gottfried in submitting a letter to the FAA expressing our dismay over this backroom decision.

The rules that the FAA rolled back were put in place after a tragic accident in 2009 when a midair collision between a plane and a tourist helicopter cost nine people their lives. In the past, I have repeatedly called for a ban on all non-essential aircraft flights over New York City, particularly those operated by the tourist industry.

In our letter, we urged the FAA to immediately suspend its decision to allow helicopters and private planes to share airspace over the Hudson River and open the matter for public comment and input. Of course, the tourist industry is important to New York City, but the FAA must not endanger tourists' or residents' lives.