



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Toby Ann Stavisky

## Senator Stavisky Unveils Sound Monitor Data and Calls For Reduction to Airplane Noise Once and For All

TOBY ANN STAVISKY July 25, 2016



Flushing, NY—Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing), joined by Senator Joseph Addabbo Jr, Councilman Peter Koo, Community Activist Susan Carroll, Chairman of Community Board 7 Aviation Committee Warren Schrieber, Len Schaier of Quiet Skies, residents and community leaders, announced data from a Federal Aviation Administration sound monitor – located on Franklin Avenue – and once again called for a reduction to airplane noise.

According to FAA regulations, plane noise should not exceed the 65 DNL (Day/Night Noise Level) federal limit; however, data from a local Flushing sound monitor shows the noise surpasses 65 DNL about a third of the time. Out of 92 days, from March through May, 32 days show plane noise exceeding the FAA limit.

“The issue of plane noise is nothing new to the thousands of families being affected by it every day. Ask anyone living in this neighborhood and I’m sure they will tell you how disruptive plane noise can be,” State Senator Toby Ann Stavisky said. “With this data, we now see what we’ve always known: parts of Queens are subjected to higher levels of sound than others. Not only must we ensure the federally set noise threshold is not surpassed, but we must also revisit the maximum DNL allowed. We now know the current threshold of 65 DNL is obsolete. Having been created in the 1970s, it could not take into account the numerous studies that suggest the negative health impact.”

In May, the senator drafted a letter with several of her colleagues calling for a reduction to the noise threshold from 65 DNL to 55 DNL. The lower figure being requested reflects an acceptable sound level determined by a number of organizations and agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, World Health Organization and Harvard School of Medicine.

The letter was sent to United States Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, who, in response, said there are "significant issues with the outdated DNL threshold, and failure for the current model to properly reflect human experience."

“This noise monitor in Flushing was among the noise readers that the Port Authority installed in Queens after I urged the agency to do so. The increased DNL readings underscore the problem of excessive aircraft noise over our borough and why we must continue our fight to combat it. I’ve been leading the effort in Congress to do that and this includes

initiatives to reduce the noise level standard to 55 DNL. We cannot allow the roaring sounds of airplane noise to disrupt the quality of life in our neighborhoods," Congresswoman Grace Meng said.

"The constant din of airplanes flying over downtown Flushing is a drain on the health, well-being and overall sanity of residents and visitors alike. Prior to 2012, planes flew over Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and would only temporarily be rerouted over homes during the US Open. That temporary nuisance imposed on residents became permanent after the FAA unilaterally refused to revert the flight path back over the park. Lowering the DNL will help reduce the undue impact, but ultimately, the FAA must get serious about rerouting flight paths to reflect the needs of the communities who live under them, not annual tennis tournaments," Councilman Peter Koo said.

"As LaGuardia Airport has embarked on its redevelopment project, there has been much talk about it becoming a world-class airport. However, part of being a world-class airport includes being a good neighbor. LGA has failed its neighbors in recent years, especially Flushing, which has endured hazardous levels of airplane noise and pollution daily and nightly. The redirecting of flights from Flushing Meadows Corona Park to the increasingly populated residential areas of Flushing, on both takeoffs and landings, has become the new normal. This is simply unacceptable, and the livability of this community is at stake. There are ways for the airport to achieve efficiency without sacrificing neighborhoods in the process. The economic benefits of the airports should not outweigh the health and well-being of the hard-working residents of Queens," Community Activist Susan Carroll said.

"We are all lucky to have Senator Stavisky working for all us on the aircraft noise issue. Importantly, she helped pass the legislation for the Part 150 Study and is now a leader in the effort to reduce the DNL noise threshold by a factor of 10 from 65 to 55. This reduction would allow the FAA to provide funds for noise mitigation which can include changes in

arrival/takeoff procedures, path changes and noise insulation. The health impacts due to noise can be significant. A recent Port Authority of New York New Jersey study for the new Central Terminal Building at LaGuardia has shown that in 2013 there were approximately 5200 people in 1912 home in areas near LGA at or above 65 DNL, and in 2021 there will 8143 residents in 2945 homes at the same levels Please join Senator Stavisky, Congresswoman Meng, Councilman Koo, in our fight against aircraft noise,” said Len Schaier of quietskies.net.

“The people of Queens have become all too familiar with airplane noise. We plan our lives around it, out of necessity. We know to keep our windows closed, pause in the middle of conversations and to turn up the volume on our televisions. Despite the FAA speaking the contrary, the problem is only getting worse and it is time to act. We are lucky to have elected officials, like Senator Stavisky, Congresswoman Grace Meng, and others, who have recognized the issue and shown a commitment to quieting our skies. I am hopeful that our work as residents and community leaders and the work of our elected officials will bring about change soon, but we must remain persistent,” Chairman of Community Board 7 Aviation Committee Warren Schrieber

## Facts and Data

At 39th Avenue in Flushing, the average DNL for 2015 was 68.5 – well above the accepted 65 DNL limit.

At 138-10 Franklin Avenue, from March to May, there were 32 days during which plane noise exceeded the 65 DNL limit.

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