

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 12, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Michael Whitaker
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Secretary Buttigieg and Administrator Whitaker:

We write in support of the Aviation-Impacted Communities Alliance’s (AICA) letter to Secretary Buttigieg dated July 18, 2024, with the subject line, “Communities seek sufficient representation for FAA committees and community feedback provisions in FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024.” Airplane noise is an issue today in part because the FAA has continually failed to consider community input over the years. On the heels of the bipartisan passage of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 (“Reauthorization”), we urge the FAA to ensure robust community participation throughout implementation of the Reauthorization’s airplane noise provisions.

Members of airport-adjacent communities as far as 20 miles away from a major airport have long known what the FAA has only recently acknowledged: that aviation noise poses a far greater daily nuisance and health risk than originally anticipated. Studies show that aviation noise disrupts sleep, causes chronic stress, and leads to higher risk of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and mental illness. These risks, combined with the FAA’s past failures to recognize the effects of its aviation noise policies, underscore the importance of incorporating community feedback into policy conversations.

Section 792 of the Reauthorization forms an Aircraft Noise Advisory Committee (ANAC) to evaluate and offer changes to the FAA’s current aviation noise policies. Importantly, the Reauthorization mandates that the ANAC include multiple representatives of airport-adjacent communities, in addition to industry professionals. In their letter, the AICA requests a minimum of four community representatives on the ANAC and proposes a handful of parameters for the FAA to consider during the selection process. We support these suggestions and urge the FAA to ensure a robust ratio of community representatives to industry professionals.

In addition, we encourage the FAA to prioritize formation of the ANAC in order to meet the statutory deadline of November 12, 2024. The FAA and local airport authorities receive thousands of noise complaints every month, making it clear that the agency’s current noise policies are not working for airport-adjacent communities. It is essential that the FAA move quickly to establish the ANAC so that communities can experience relief sooner rather than later.

The Reauthorization includes various other provisions that require the FAA to consult with communities, including Section 786 requiring the FAA to update Part 150, Section 793 regarding the coordination of FAA’s community engagement on noise issues, and Section 916 creating an

unmanned and autonomous flight advisory committee. We echo AICA's request that the FAA ensure vigorous community participation in its implementation of these statutes while considering factors such as the number of and accessibility of opportunities for community members to participate.

Members of the affected communities are the most qualified to testify to the realities and effectiveness of the FAA's aviation noise policies. Therefore, the FAA must do its part to solicit community feedback and ensure that it informs the agency's decisions and strategy to reduce aviation noise impacts.

Sincerely,



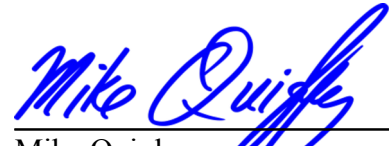
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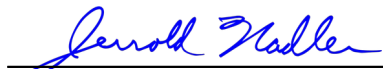
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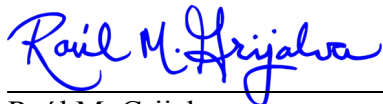
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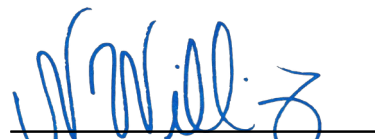
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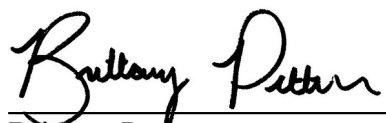
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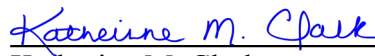
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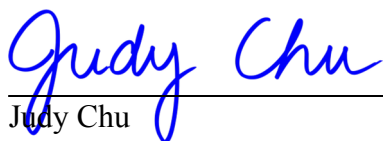
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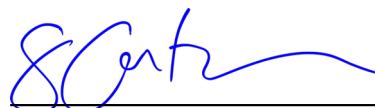
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