

Culver City Acts to Address Aircraft Noise

- Recognizing the critical need to address aircraft noise in the City of Culver City, the Mayor and City Council engaged Congress as it drafted and debated the FAA Reauthorization Bill of 2018, which was signed into law in October.
- The new law includes several provisions sought by the City. Thanks to the leadership of Representative Karen Bass, Senator Dianne Feinstein, and Senator Kamala Harris, the new law includes provisions sought by the City that will 1) direct the FAA to consider aircraft noise near airports, 2) ensure the use of measurements that will provide more accurate assessments of noise impacts, 3) provide opportunities for improved access to the FAA on aircraft noise, and 4) mandate studies that will give the public hard information on how noise affects our City and what they can do to improve the situation.

Major Noise Provisions

These are the major provisions in the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-254) that the City of Culver City sought and were included in the new law:

Reviews Existing Flight Pattern

- Directs the FAA, when proposing a new area navigation departure procedure, or amending an existing procedure that would direct aircraft below 6,000 feet over noise sensitive areas, to consider the feasibility of dispersal headings or other lateral track headings to address community noise concerns. (section 175)
- Directs the FAA to review existing studies of the relationship between jet aircraft approach and takeoff speeds and corresponding noise impacts on communities. (section 179)

Improves Noise Measurements

- Mandates that the on-going study of alternative noise measurements to the current 65 Day Night Level (DNL) measurements be completed within one year. (section 173)
- Directs the FAA to evaluate alternative metrics to the current average DNL standard, such as actual noise sampling, to address community airplane noise concerns. (section 188)

Enhances Community Engagement

- Directs the FAA to 1) complete a review of community involvement practices for NextGen projects, including how and when to engage communities in performance-based navigation procedures and 2) report to Congress on a) how FAA will improve community engagement, b) how and when FAA will engage airports and communities in performance-based navigation procedures, and c) how lessons learned are being integrated into community involvement for future NextGen projects. (section 176)
- Requires FAA to appoint an ombudsman in each FAA region to 1) serve as a liaison with the public and community groups on aircraft noise, pollution, and safety and 2) be consulted on

proposed changes in aircraft operations (arrival and departure routes) to minimize environmental impacts, including noise. (section 180)

Recognizes the Need for Additional Studies

- Directs the Government Accountability Office to study the benefits and costs of the phase-out of Stage 3 aircraft. (section 186)
- Directs the FAA to conclude its ongoing review of the relationship between aircraft noise exposure and its effects on communities around airports (section 187)
- Directs FAA to contract with an institution of higher learning to study the health impacts, (including sleep and blood pressure) from aircraft flights on residents exposed to a range of noise levels. The bill specifies that the SoCal metroplex is one of the nine to be studied. (section 189)

Establishes a Grant Program to Make Environmental Improvements

- Authorizes the FAA to establish an environmental mitigation pilot program at up to six airports to award grants for projects that reduce or mitigate aviation impacts on noise, air quality, or water quality at the airport or within five miles of the airport. (section 190)