

NLC RESOLUTION #35

[TIS Recommendation: Approve]

REDUCE THE ECONOMIC, NOISE AND HEALTH IMPACTS OF OVERFLIGHTS OF CITIES FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF NEXTGEN'S AIRSPACE REDESIGN

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is implementing both a National Airspace Redesign—a multi-year initiative to review, redesign, and restructure the nation's airspace to meet the rapidly changing and increasing demands on the National Airspace System — and an Air Traffic Control System upgrade named “NextGen;” and

WHEREAS, the NextGen System allows for aircraft to fly more closely together, both vertically and horizontally, during landing and takeoff, which has concentrated flight paths at low altitudes over residential areas of the U.S. with increased frequency; and

WHEREAS, in some states, the FAA did not conduct Environmental Impact Studies that use a noise standard that accurately reflects the impact of NextGen routing over residential communities; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Noise Control Act and the Clean Air Act Title IV- Noise Pollution indicate that aircraft and their turbojet engines are a source of noise and air pollution that require mitigation; and

WHEREAS, problems related to noise include stress-related illnesses, high blood pressure, speech interference, hearing loss, sleep disruption, and lost productivity; and

WHEREAS, frequent low flying aircraft increases risk on the ground and also adversely impacts economic development, property values, and the quality of life of residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the National League of Cities urges Congress and the FAA to reduce the economic, noise and health impacts of the implementation of NextGen's Airspace Redesign and protect the public against NextGen-related impacts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NLC supports FAA's goals of aircraft safety and security, and the full funding and implementation of the FAA Reauthorization Act, which includes the following major provision, among others:

- “Mandates that the ongoing study of alternative noise measurements to the current 65 decibel day-night average sound level (DNL) measurements be completed within one year”; and,
- Immediate utilization of alternative single-event noise metrics, which are better suited to analyzing noise impacts over affected communities; and,
- Acceleration of funding to NASA for research and development to address aviation noise, at its source—aircraft engines and airframes; and,
- Continued vigilance to ensure that Congress and FAA take additional steps to reduce aircraft noise and enhance the quality of life for residents and citizens affected by overflights.