



March 9, 2022

Senate Bill 658

Transportation - Maryland Aviation Infrastructure Impacts Commission

Senate Finance Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 658 – Transportation - Maryland Aviation Infrastructure Impacts Commission. Senate Bill 658 establishes the Maryland Aviation Infrastructure Impacts Commission to study the health and environmental impacts of commercial aviation, particularly as it relates to communities affected by flight paths associated with the Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI).

Noise pollution and bombardment is a significant issue for residents in communities along flight paths, which go directly over schools, parks, wildlife areas, shopping centers, and residential areas. Although the Federal Aviation Administration and airports have taken steps to mitigate some noise associated with flight paths, communities in Anne Arundel, Howard, Montgomery, and Baltimore Counties continue to experience adverse impacts. Data from the Maryland Department of Transportation shows that BWI receives over 1,000 complaints each day.

Residents in these communities experience sleep disruption and difficulty enjoying the outdoors. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that airport noise pollution can be much more than just a nuisance, and can actually have serious health implications. According to the journal *Noise & Health*, aircraft noise can disrupt sleep, adversely affect academic performance in children, and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease for people living in the vicinity of airports. Exposure to high levels of air traffic noise has also been associated with high blood pressure and anxiety.

The Commission created by this bill will have representation from the counties most affected by BWI flight paths, will have support from a school of public health, and will seek advice from state officials, citizen advisory groups, experts, and industry representatives. Senate Bill 658 will ensure that we have the evidence-based data we need to make informed decisions to protect the health of our communities and minimize preventable health-related outcomes.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 658.

Steuart Pittman
County Executive