

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR of SENATE BILL 658

"Transportation – Maryland Aviation Infrastructure Impacts Commission

3/8/2022

We are writing today in favor of Senate Bill 658 "Transportation – Maryland Aviation Infrastructure Impacts Commission" to underscore the importance of its mission to review the medical and health burdens and the environmental impacts resulting from commercial airline growth and infrastructure changes in Maryland and the BWI airport corridors impacted by NextGen. The costs associated with this Commission – while not insignificant – are an investment in the future of Marylanders.

We have lived in Crownsville for over two decades and have long enjoyed outdoor activities in this waterfront community along the Severn River. The implementation of NextGen-enabled air traffic control has upended the peace of this semi-rural community with inundating and relentless noise – stemming from the concentration and number of flights that swarm in and out of BWI at low altitudes over our homes during the day, night, and early morning hours. We used to enjoy the peace of being outdoors, sharing dinner on the deck with friends, or simply opening a window on a warm spring day. With NextGen, that is no longer possible. Where there used to be almost silence, we now have flights converging from multiple directions on arrival to the airport at altitudes anywhere from 1500 to 2500 feet above our homes and beaches hundreds of times a day. These flights may not seem like a big deal to those who do not live directly under these routes, but it is so much different for those of us who cannot escape it.

NextGen has created a "supercharged overhead railroad in the sky" and a barrage of repetitive routes and noise over select communities that are well outside the regulated airport noise contours zones that the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) is required to report. While the MAA continues to grow the airport business and its property to support its business interests, the Administration's willingness to truly understand, empathize and help to resolve the noise issues resulting from this progress is limited. As part of its noise analysis and its work for the citizens of Maryland, the MAA relies on state noise mandates from the 1974 Maryland Noise Abatement law as a basis for its decisions and steadfastly refuses to consider applying something new to problems in the second decade of the 21st Century.

To put that year in perspective, 1974 is the year that:

- Richard Nixon resigned his Presidency.
- Toshiba introduced the first floppy computer storage disks.
- Private college tuition was \$2300 per year; and
- A gallon of milk, a pound of bacon, and a dozen eggs cost around \$3.50.

The impact of these concentrated flights on our environment, sleep, health, and our homes needs to be quantified and understood in the present – not by a law that is nearly a half-century old.

The DC Metroplex BWI Community Roundtable, comprised of volunteer representatives from impacted communities and appointed by members of the General Assembly, has worked tirelessly to educate themselves and others and has put together some sound and thoughtful recommendations for changes to flight patterns and the impacts of airport noise, and other environmental concerns on their communities. It is time for Maryland to support the work of this Roundtable and acknowledge the work they have done to date and will do in the future. If you have not seen an example of their exceptional work, we invite you to read their thoughts and well-reasoned commentary for change to the MAA Airport Noise Zone Study (ANZ) 2020 report https://marylandaviation.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/0209_ANZ-Study-Comment.pdf.

We believe the Commission's research and guidance mission is a sound one that will help bring quantitative research and recognition to the problems. As a byproduct of the Commission's work will also help to support public policy changes that can balance the ever-increasing appetite for commercial aviation activities and airport growth with the quality of life needs for Maryland's citizens. It is time to bring noise standards related to aircraft noise and other effects of airport growth into this Century. It is time for a change and we ask that you all support SB 658. Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

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