

INTRODUCTION: ...worked in the nonprofit world for many years. She's a Flushing native who enjoyed watching sports and soaps until she was forced by the FAA to become an aviation expert and community activist. She's a member of the Port Authority's Community Aviation Round Table. Can we have a round of applause for Susan Carroll.

(applause)

Hi, everybody. So, uh, waited a long time to speak today, that's OK. So, how many of you are from Flushing? Yeah! So am I. I was born and raised there. And, for all those who say, *'the airports were here first, so you should expect the noise that you're receiving'*, I say, I have always been aware of the airports' location. It is the airports who are no longer aware of OUR locations here.

(applause)

Flushing was a great place to grow up. I loved going to the Queens Botanical Gardens, sledding in the winter, shopping on Main Street, going to Skyline Pool, sitting in the local parks. Now, I can't enjoy any of those places. The simple task of going to the mail box at the corner has become too much to bear. I can't sleep. I can't watch TV. I can't sit on my terrace. I have to keep the AC on, even in cooler weather, to drown out the noise. My home feels like a prison now. And, having lost my job last year, the pain is even worse.

So, what changed? Yes there were always planes in Flushing; that's to be expected; we understand that. However, several years ago, the FAA and Port Authority decided that airport efficiency must be achieved at all costs, as we have discussed here today. The FAA boasts about more direct flight paths which save fuel. Great for the airlines, horrific for those of us on the ground. And it's important to note that proximity to the airport doesn't even matter anymore. If you are under these new, very precise flight paths, you are getting hit over and over, no matter where you live.

I was a good student growing up. Now, I wonder how kids in my neighborhood are able to concentrate and do their homework, or even play outside. Dr. Dana Gidea of Bayside recently wrote in the Times-Ledger about the detrimental effects of airplane noise and pollution on children. Senior citizens, of which there are also many in Flushing, are most vulnerable, too.

I live in a high-rise next door to an un-soundproofed elementary school. The Port Authority noise monitor on my roof, installed just last month, has already broken down three times and lost six days of data. However, when it has worked, it has shown decibel levels as high as 96, and frequent readings in the 80's. As we discussed, with 65 decibels on average, is what the FAA considers to be significant.

The FAA says these new flights paths – which, as we've learned today, they did not do a proper environmental impact study on – show no significant impact. Well, they are very, very wrong. Yes, air traffic has increased, but so has the population of New York City, particularly Flushing, which is now a thriving immigrant community. We deserve better. No one should be subjected to planes flying at low altitudes at one-minute intervals for eighteen hours a day, every day.

(applause)

Enough is enough.

The FAA is comprised of very bright people. They can design routes, as they did in the past, which tried to mitigate noise, rather than increase it exponentially. And long term, in order to accommodate the increasing air traffic that is projected, they should look at solutions like the increased use of the regional airports. And possibly a new airport located away from densely populated areas.

There's a better way forward. Let's find it. Thank you.