

Phoenix sues FAA over 'extreme discomfort' from airplane noise

By Holly Yan, CNN | Updated 9:19 AM ET, Tue June 2, 2015



Story highlights

- Phoenix city officials say there was no due process when the FAA changed its flight paths
- The FAA says it supports adjusting some departures and restricting some turns for early flights

How bad is the airplane noise over Phoenix?

Bad enough that some residents can't hear each other talk. Bad enough that many can't sleep. Bad enough that the city is now suing the Federal Aviation Administration.

"When I talk to my wife, I can't hear what she says," Phoenix resident Michael March said.

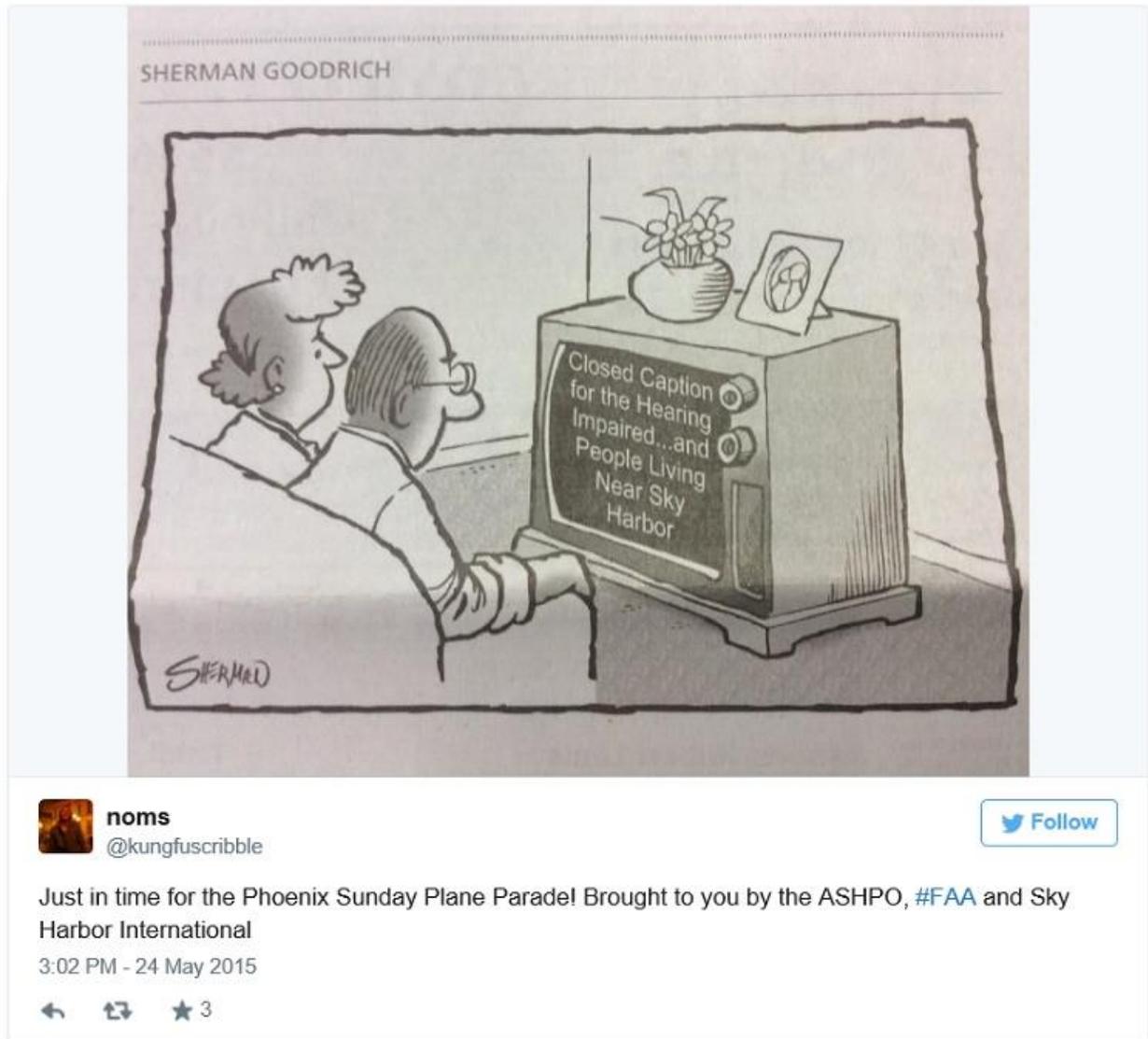
March, who lives 8 miles from Sky Harbor International Airport, said the problem has gone "from zero, or non-existent, to constant."

The cacophony started last September, when the FAA changed flight paths in the Phoenix area. Both the FAA and airlines said the changes would increase safety and decrease fuel costs, the city of Phoenix said.

"The FAA's actions have caused the community extreme discomfort, with many unable to sleep at night or pursue normal daily activities," the city said in a statement. It claims the FAA caused "a negative impact on the Phoenix community without proper due process, notification and consideration."

"The FAA decided to move a highway in the sky without following legal requirements to consult with stakeholders," city councilwoman Kate Gallego said.

The FAA said Monday that it has not seen the lawsuit and can't comment on pending legislation.



But in a letter to the city manager Monday, FAA regional administrator Glen Martin said the agency supports certain changes, such as adjusting westbound departures and restricting some turns for early flights.

March said serious changes can't come soon enough. He said the noise isn't just obnoxious for residents -- it could threaten home values and affect air quality closer to homes.

"It is super frustrating, and we've had no hope," he said.

March said he hopes the city's lawsuit will make the FAA think again about changing flight plans over other cities.

"All we want is just the old flight patterns to be put back," he said. "We feel that the FAA screwed up."

CNN's Diane Ruggiero and Rene Marsh contributed to this report.

Copied 6/2/2015 from: <http://www.cnn.com/2015/06/02/travel/phoenix-sues-faa-airplane-noise/index.html>

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