

Meng Reintroduces Bill to Put EPA in Charge of Combating Airplane Noise; Measure Would Take Job Away from FAA

Move seeks to improve efforts to mitigate aircraft noise over Queens and other impacted communities

Rep. Grace Meng, Press Release | MAY 22, 2017

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In an effort to better mitigate excessive airplane noise, U.S. Rep. Grace Meng (D-Queens) reintroduced legislation that would take the job of combating aircraft noise away from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and instead provide the responsibility to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Quiet Communities Act of 2017 (H.R. 2539) would reopen the EPA’s Office of Noise Abatement and Control (ONAC), which oversaw the nation’s efforts to mitigate noise pollution until it was defunded by the Reagan Administration in 1981 due to budget cuts. The bill would also require the EPA Administrator to conduct a study of airport noise and examine the FAA’s selection of noise measurement methodologies, health impact thresholds, and abatement program effectiveness.

“Queens and many other parts of the country continue to suffer from the effects of excessive airplane noise and the negative impact it has on people’s quality of life,” said Meng. “Shifting the job of noise mitigation from the FAA to the EPA would help us better address the problem, and the idea makes perfect sense. Aircraft noise is an environmental issue that can impact the health of Americans, and the EPA has overseen these types of noise issues in the past. The FAA’s lack of success in combating airplane noise illustrates the need for a different solution. I say we give the job back to the EPA.”

Meng first introduced the Quiet Communities Act in 2015 during the last session of Congress and the measure gained a significant amount of traction. The legislation garnered 25 cosponsors from Members of Congress whose districts across the country also struggle with excessive aircraft noise, and it spurred local and national conversations about reopening ONAC. In addition, New York Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand introduced a Senate version of the measure.

Current co-sponsors of Meng’s bill include Reps. Karen Bass (D-CA), Michael Capuano (D-MA), Joe Crowley (D-NY), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Ruben Gallego (D-AZ), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Mike Quigley (D-IL), Kathleen Rice (D-NY), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Adam Smith (D-WA), Jackie Speier (D-CA) and Tom Suozzi (D-NY). All are members of the Quiet Skies Caucus, of which Meng is a founding member and former Co-Chair.

Although airplane noise has long existed over Queens due to the proximity of New York’s airports, the increased sounds of jets significantly increased in 2012 when the FAA implemented new flight patterns over the borough. These new routes, which are for airplanes departing LaGuardia, have increased the frequency of flights over residential neighborhoods in Queens, and the substantial rise in aircraft noise has negatively impacted borough residents.

A copy of the bill can be found [here](#).

Copied 5/31/2017 from: <https://meng.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/meng-reintroduces-bill-to-put-epa-in-charge-of-combating-airplane-noise> (Highlights, footnotes and minor edits may have been added, but only to add analysis & clarification)