

Meng Seeks Funds To Fight Airplane Noise

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On Thursday, U.S Rep. Grace Meng (D-Flushing) announced that she had called on a key Congressional committee to do everything possible to help fight the increased plane noise over Queens.

Meng wrote a letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies to urge the panel to include specific noise mitigation measures in its annual spending bill.

In the letter, Meng is asking for increased funding for FAA programs, which would address airplane noise, she is also requesting for increased community involvement in determining the flight paths, regulations and guidance for quieter airplanes and lowering the acceptable noise threshold known as the Day-Night Average Sound Level. DNL is used to measure the noise effects on individuals.

Meng is also asking for the committee to spend \$1.5 million to continue to expand noise research programs. This would measure the noise annoyance and sleep disturbance throughout the community by expanding the breadth and depth of the area of data-collection. The \$1.5 million is double the amount that the president's budget requests.

In addition to the \$1.5 million that she is asking for, Meng is asking for \$16,074,000 for the Energy and Environment Program, which focuses on the noise impacts made on social welfare, social health, the development of technologies to better estimate the noise and emissions, as well as exploring the metrics for community exposure to aircraft noise. This is over \$1 million more than the president's budget requests.



File Photo

U.S. Rep. Grace Meng is calling for more Congressional action to combat airplane noise.

Meng is asking the panel to include certain language in the bill, which would:

- Prohibit funds from being used to implement flight paths that were approved through a categorical exclusion (CatEx), which allows a shorter environmental review process that does not take the community's concerns into account. If included, the language would increase community involvement in the development of flight patterns.

- Prohibit funds from being used for flight patterns that result in a noise level above 55 DNL (the current cap is 65 DNL). If included, the language would require the FAA to lower acceptable noise levels to

55 DNL.

- Require the FAA to develop regulations and guidance for the creation of a new, quieter stage 5 airplane noise standards, which is consistent with the latest international standards.

- Require the FAA to review how noise is measured, and propose updates and alternatives that better reflect actual noise levels. If included, the language would create a more accurate assessment of the impacts of aircraft noise.

"Increased airplane noise continues to bombard Queens," said Meng. "Our borough needs relief, and including these provisions in this year's spending bill would be a major step in getting us there. I respectfully ask the Committee to make these anti-noise measures part of this important legislation."

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