



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

Great Lakes Region  
2300 East Devon Avenue  
Des Plaines, IL 60018

**JUL - 9 2015**

The Honorable John G. Mulroe  
Illinois Senate  
127 Capitol Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Mr. Mulroe,

This letter is provided in response to a May 14, 2015 letter you wrote to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), requesting FAA assistance to curtail activities associated with decommissioning of O'Hare Airport's diagonal runways until ongoing dialogue regarding those runways has been completed.

To begin, I was pleased to have the opportunity to talk with you and other state legislators via a telephone call on May 22, 2015, and to meet you in person and talk briefly at the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) offices last week.

Regarding the request contained in your May 14 letter, you may be aware that CDA Commissioner Ginger Evans sent me a letter on June 29, 2015, requesting *"That the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) delay any action on Runway 14L-32R that would lead to irreparable damage to that runway for so long as necessary to complete the FAA's four open house meetings for the Re-Evaluation of the O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) Environmental Impact Statement and the MOU meetings between the City of Chicago and the members of the Illinois General Assembly (three meetings to occur before August 1, 2015)"*. The FAA intends to comply with that request from the CDA.

The FAA is keenly aware that communities surrounding airports – especially airports as busy as O'Hare – are impacted by noise. Mitigation of airport noise is primarily the responsibility of the airport operator – in the case of O'Hare, the CDA. The FAA has worked for many years with the CDA and the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) on noise mitigation initiatives, and continues to do so. Working with CDA and ONCC, FAA has approved approximately \$285 million in federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants and Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) funding for residential and school sound insulation. Additionally, FAA continues to participate with other federal agencies, universities, and industry groups to explore ways to better assess and reduce noise impacts.

At the same time, FAA continues to provide funding and technical support for completion of the OMP, which our agency approved via a Record of Decision in 2005. The modernization of O'Hare is needed to meet projected aviation demands of the future in a manner that provides improved safety and efficiency for the airport and the public. While we acknowledge that

impacts such as noise cannot be completely eliminated, the FAA has taken significant steps to help minimize those impacts, and we will continue to do so as technological advancements in the aviation industry provide those opportunities.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 847-294-7294.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry D. Cooper". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barry D. Cooper  
Regional Administrator  
Great Lakes Region

cc: Ginger Evans, Commissioner, Chicago Department of Aviation