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August 19, 2013

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky
United States Congress Illinois 9th District
5533 N Broadway
Chicago IL 60640

Dear Congressman Schakowsky

I am writing on behalf of the residents of Park Ridge and of the northwest suburban and city residents who have been grossly affected by the increased air traffic and noise These residents are also very concerned about the environmental impact as a result of aircraft flying into and out of O'Hare International Airport over their community While Park Ridge and neighboring communities are already experiencing increased air traffic and substantial noise complaints, the residents in my community are even more concerned about the October 2013 proposed increase in takeoff and landing traffic during the day and at night This traffic is scheduled to increase two-fold during daytime hours and an astronomical five hundred percent during the evening and nighttime hours Therefore I plead for your support of the following

- An immediate halt to the proposed October 2013 takeoff and landing plan Instead devise a neighborhood-based plan, working with community groups, businesses, the ONCC and the FAA for fair allocation of air traffic between existing and new runways for day and night air traffic
- Support the request to have the FAA conduct a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to verify what the real environmental impacts will be from this new runway utilization plan Significant changes have occurred since the original EIS was conducted in 2005 and need to be addressed
- Continue to utilize all existing and new runways
- Expand noise monitoring and abatement programs to ensure that specific communities are not unduly burdened
- Mandate that "Fly Quiet" is the official policy for O'Hare

I have grave concerns that when the original EIS was conducted Chicago and suburban parks and parkways and the Cook County Forest Preserve District trees were an important mitigating component in reducing noise and air pollution. The loss of ash trees has been significant and continues Their loss not only impacts current traffic patterns over residential Chicago and Park Ridge, but could severely impact those areas which are slated to see sharp increases in air traffic from the new utilization plan The way to account for these changes per applicable federal laws that govern airport operations is to do a Supplemental Environmental Impact Study

I am also concerned that the current "Fly Quiet" program was devised under the existing runway usage plan and heavily relies on interstate highways and forest preserves as alternate routes to reduce noise and pollution over residential areas. The new runway plan foresees the shifting of 85% of all O'Hare traffic in an east/west direction, but the FAA has not accounted for what modifications may be needed in the Fly Quiet routes given that few forest preserves run east/west. This program needs to be updated and airlines must be given real incentives to use these routes.

I join with my northwest suburban and northwest Chicago residents and insist that the greatest possible care and consideration be afforded to the health, welfare, and well-being of metropolitan Chicago residents who live, work, and own homes under O'Hare's current and proposed flight paths. Increased traffic at O'Hare should not unduly and unfairly burden one area. I look forward to meeting with you directly to talk about these issues and my concerns.

Sincerely,

David F. Schmidt, Mayor
City of Park Ridge, Illinois

cc Alderman Martin Maloney (O'Hare Airport Commission liaison)
Alderman Marc Mazzuca (Sixth Ward Alderman)

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