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June 9, 2009

Mr. Barry D. Cooper
Regional Administrator
Great Lakes Region
Federal Aviation Administration
2300 E. Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, IL 60018

Re: O'Hare Jet Noise Over Edgewater, Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Cooper:

This letter is in response to correspondence I received from Joyce D. Scott on your behalf, dated May 18, 2009, which she sent in response to concerns that I raised in a recent letter about jet noise over Chicago's Edgewater community. Frankly, I do not find Ms. Scott's reply at all satisfactory.

Distilled down, the FAA's response to Edgewater's jet noise problem essentially is that "the noise levels comply with the current DNL standards, so you have nothing to complain about." However, the FAA's reliance on DNL standards is misplaced, as Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky recently has indicated. As you are well aware, DNL standards are based on average noise exposure over a specified time frame. Your response (and the FAA's reliance on DNL) is a little like saying that a person shouldn't be concerned about a car horn blaring in front of their house if it only blares for 30 minutes an hour ten hours a day, because when you average it out over 24 hours, it really isn't that loud. Anyone who lives with the noise knows just how ridiculous a standard based on "average" noise levels is. The FAA's position that noise isn't an issue in Edgewater because Edgewater supposedly has a DNL of 45 to 50 simply does not reflect the reality on the ground under the flight paths. DNL fails to adequately assess the impact of concentrated noise and should not be relied upon blindly or used by regulators as an excuse to ignore the legitimate noise concerns of local residents.

Ms. Scott also seemed to imply that those of us concerned about increasing jet noise over Edgewater are somehow angling for government assistance with sound-proofing or other direct mitigation. This is not the case. What we are asking is that the FAA adopt reasoned and innovative approaches to the mitigation of increasing jet noise over our communities.

For example, the FAA should be aggressively pushing the study of continuous descent approach (CDA) procedures at O'Hare, which has been mentioned at ONCC meetings for months. As you must know, CDA procedures typically delay descents below 7000 feet until as

late as possible and reduce thrust from about 220 knots until final approach speed is reached. My understanding is that many planes over Edgewater are flying at an altitude on the order of 2000-3000 feet. Yet we are 15 miles from O'Hare. CDA has been widely adopted in Europe and I understand that it has been successfully tested at LAX and ATL. It really is quite simple: **Keep the planes higher longer.** Instead of quoting dubious DNL standards in response to noise complaints, the FAA should acknowledge the need to aggressively pursue remedies for the noise problem, including CDA and other mitigation options.

I urge you to cooperate fully with Rep. Schakowsky's request that the FAA address the deficiencies of DNL standards and that remedial action be undertaken with all deliberate speed. I also urge you to aggressively study other noise mitigation options, such as CDA, and request that you develop with public input a new plan for addressing these matters prior to any further expansion of O'Hare. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

cc: Brian Gilligan
Honorable Arlene J. Mulder
Alderman Mary Ann Smith
Rep. Jan Schakowsky
Federal Aviation Administration