



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 281

Resolution calling upon Congress to require the Federal Aviation Administration to promulgate regulations on air quality and noise for tourist helicopters flying over New York City.

By Council Members Menchaca, Chin, Rosenthal and Constantinides

Whereas, A great number of tourist helicopters fly over the city of New York every day; and

Whereas, According to the Natural Resources Defense Council's 1999 study "Needless Noise: The Negative Impacts of Helicopter Traffic in New York City and the Tri-State Region," studies have shown exposure to frequent overhead flights to be associated with a number of health effects in children, including high blood pressure, neuroendocrinological issues, impaired psychological and cognitive functions, learned helplessness, poorer long-term memory, and diminished reading comprehension; and

Whereas, Helicopters emit air pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, and formaldehyde, which are known to cause asthma, cancer, and other illnesses; and

Whereas, In January 2017, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) reduced tourist helicopter traffic and noise in half by limiting the number of flights departing from Manhattan's Pier 6 heliport to 28,000 per year and ending all Sunday flights; and

Whereas, The NYCEDC, working with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), five helicopter tour operators, and the Eastern Region Helicopter Council, has also established agreed upon rules to limit the impact of helicopters on the public; and

Whereas, The above-referenced rules need to be formalized and strengthened by the FAA

promulgating enforceable rules generated through an open public process; and

Whereas, The City of Los Angeles passed a similar resolution, which lead to federal legislation requiring the FAA to voluntarily issue tourist helicopter regulations within a year that would restrict helicopter flight paths and minimum altitudes in Los Angeles County in order to minimize helicopter impacts on public health or, if they do not meet the year deadline, requires them to issue such regulations; and

Whereas, There has been a great deal of public outcry for relief from impacts caused by helicopter tours in New York City, including from a wide range of public officials; and

Whereas, Similar measures to restrict flight paths and set minimum altitudes as was done in Los Angeles could alleviate much of the harm caused by helicopter tours; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon Congress to require the Federal Aviation Administration to promulgate regulations on air quality and noise for tourist helicopters flying over New York City.

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