

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 25, 2021

The Honorable Steve Dickson  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

**RE: Proposed NextGen Modifications to the Northern California Metroplex**

Dear Administrator Dickson:

We are writing in regard to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) intention to make additional Air Traffic Control (ATC) modifications to the Northern California Metroplex, with particular respect to procedures related to the Oakland International Airport (OAK). We understand that the most recently described modifications to the WNDSR Area Navigation (RNAV) procedure could impact the path of certain flights arriving to OAK from the north.

The Port of Oakland notified our offices that since the introduction of the NextGen program in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2015, OAK and other airports throughout the region have received a significant increase in noise-related complaints from our constituents, primarily because of the increased concentration of aircraft activity along certain arrival and departure routes.

OAK leadership and stakeholders affiliated with the Oakland Airport/Community Noise Management Forum ("Noise Forum") were recently notified of the FAA's intention to implement a modification to the WNDSR Standard Terminal Arrival route into OAK. This proposed procedure would apparently shift flights from their current course along the East Bay hills and move them westward to a course that overflies a denser population situated among certain unincorporated areas of West Contra Costa County and the cities of Richmond, El Cerrito, Albany, and Berkeley, among other impacted areas.

The presentation by FAA representatives and discussions on the proposed changes during the July and October 2020 OAK Noise Forum meetings have generated concerns from our constituents. Primarily, it does not appear that the FAA is conducting a meaningful public outreach and engagement process to inform potentially impacted residents of this proposed change. Additionally, FAA staff have been unable to clearly detail the type of environmental analysis that will be conducted to analyze the impacts of this modification and whether any direct outreach to impacted stakeholders will be initiated as part of that environmental review. In addition, we have concerns about how the proposed changes will affect communities that historically have suffered from environmental injustices – including higher levels of air and noise pollution.

The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 directed the FAA to enhance the Agency's community engagement practices related to airplane noise impacts on communities. We respectfully request that you provide us with information on your agency's efforts related to this matter, that they be consistent with both the spirit and the letter of the Reauthorization Act, and that they include a direct line of communication between our constituents and the FAA about this proposed change. Finally, we ask that you keep our offices informed with any further FAA decisions related to this flight route modification.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our thoughts on this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee  
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress

cc: Raquel Girvin, FAA Western-Pacific Regional Administrator  
Bryant L. Francis, Director of Aviation, Port of Oakland  
Oakland Airport/Community Noise Management Forum Members