

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

May 10, 2017

Ms. Ginger Evans  
Commissioner  
Chicago Department of Aviation  
10510 W. Zemke Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60666

Dear Commissioner Evans:

With the resumption April 30 of the Fly Quiet runway rotation test, we, the undersigned Members of Congress, are writing to express our concerns regarding the future of noise mitigation efforts at O'Hare Airport.

We, like many of our constituents, were largely pleased with the successful 26-week test of the Fly Quiet runway rotations that ended in December, 2016 and were encouraged to see CDA's willingness to work with the FAA and community members on instituting another Fly Quiet rotation program this spring. However, without diagonal runway 15/33 included in the resumed and altered Fly Quiet program, air traffic controllers at O'Hare will have fewer options for disbursing operations at the airport and granting some measure of noise relief to neighborhoods impacted by aircraft passing overhead.

Local communities including Schiller Park, Bensenville, Elk Grove Village, Park Ridge, and Glenview continue to experience hundreds or even thousands of noise events exceeding a 65 DNL level. As these incidences are a threat to public health and the standard of living of our constituents, all available options for reducing noise impacts must be explored. That said, O'Hare is also a key economic driver for our region, and we believe that the efficiency and vitality the airport is vital.

Analysis of previous Fly Quiet rotations revealed that air traffic controller flexibility is paramount in achieving noise reductions while maintaining operational efficiency. Overnight operations at O'Hare already exceed flight projections at the end of OMP and the need for additional runway options is only going to increase as cargo traffic increases and airlines continue to fly larger planes. Retaining runway 15/33 and incorporating it into the Fly Quiet rotations, as well as normal airport operations and final improvement plan, will allow O'Hare to utilize an important noise mitigation asset and give traffic controllers increased flexibility to respond to changing weather and the demands of a growing airport, in addition to neighborhood noise concerns.

We are aware that support for the continued use of runway 15/33 has been dismissed in the past. But we believe that benefits in airport flexibility and noise reductions should not be discounted, and we have yet to see a compelling reason for decommissioning it which outweighs those advantages.

As Members of Congress and the congressional Quiet Skies Caucus, we look forward to working with CDA, FAA, the local community, and other stakeholders to find solutions that that bring needed relief to homes and residents inside the O'Hare noise contours, while preserving the airport as an economic engine for Chicago and the surrounding areas.

Sincerely,

  
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

  
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

  
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress

cc: Barry Cooper, Great Lakes Regional Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration