

July 4,2016

To: The Honorable Bruce Rauner
Governor of the State of Illinois
401 E. Jackson St.
Springfield IL, 62701
Re: The Problem with O'Hare Airport Operations

The city of Chicago benefits in many ways at the expense of the suburbs. We Republicans are paying the price in noise, pollution and depreciated property values. Our tax dollars are used to build runways we don't want.

We have lived at our Park Ridge residence for almost fifty years. Aircraft noise and pollution have always been a problem. But the noise problem has been intolerable since the opening of runway 9L/27R in mid 2015. The flights occur non-stop between the hours of 6am thru 11pm.

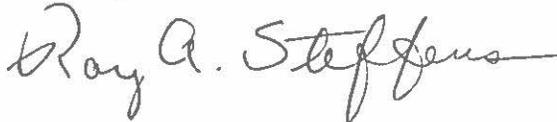
Loud and low-flying aircraft consistently pass over our house day and night. By day, they fly from east to west, nose to tail at an interval of one aircraft every minute. This pattern reverses in the afternoon and evening with eastbound take-offs that leave all runways and bank after reaching the Des Plaines River past River Road. They bank and fly in north, northwest and northeast directions. They fly over the Republican suburbs instead of Chicago as they used to do (in the past eastbound flying aircraft would fly over Chicago and then bank over Lake Michigan).

The governance structure resulting in O'Hare's problems is such that there is no accountability to the suburbs. It is stacked in Chicago's favor. What the governance structure needs is more balance such as the introduction of gubernatorial leadership. Governors have been known to step in to help in disasters. We believe that this situation is one disaster that cries for attention at the highest state level.

We would appreciate knowing what your office can do to address this problem.

R.S.V.P.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ray A. Stephens". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Date: August 23, 2015

To: Sen. Dan Kotowski

Re: O'Hare Noise Problems

We have lived in Park Ridge for forty-eight years. Our house existed before the Douglas facility was still a gleam in their CEO's eye. We are eighty years old and have been retired for twenty-two years. We explored the neighborhood before moving in 1967 to be sure noise would not be a problem. All was quiet until the diagonal runway 22R/4L was built in 1970. Recently, runway 27R/9L followed. This runway is the shortest runway, but receives the most landings compared to the others.

This background information is relevant to establish that we and our property in Park Ridge have preceded the establishment of the airport and its nearby runways. We did not come to the airport, it came to us. Low flying aircraft pass one hundred feet over our house throughout the day and night. As soon as one aircraft noise diminishes on its way to land, it is replaced by another. This effect can be visually experienced at night by watching a parade of lit up aircraft resembling a string of pearls.

In an effort to combat the noise, we have taken extreme measures to sound-proof our home without government assistance. We have replaced all the windows with double-paned glass, insulated the attic, replaced the old shingles with new, installed an extra layer of wood sheathing beneath installed awnings and planted trees to baffle the sound. All to no avail!

We have attended numerous noise abatement meetings over the past forty-five years and called in hundred of complaints. We have long since stopped our calls, since results were unproductive.

We believe that we are deprived of our constitutional right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Where is the liberty when one is confined to quarters in order to avoid the noise outside? The days of enjoying a coffee on the patio are gone, parties on the lawn gone, engaging neighbors in outside conversation gone. Our windows must remain closed on the nicest of days. Where is the pursuit of happiness in this confinement? We are now reduced to the equivalent of house arrest! Conversations in separate rooms of the house are drowned out. Even television reception is interfered with – both audio and visual.

With the constant roar, our basic right to privacy is being invaded repeatedly, day and night.

Also, since our town of Park Ridge was established long before the existence of O'Hare Field, we feel that we have air rights that cannot be abridged, but they are anyway.

The most vulnerable of the population are more exposed to noise. The aged, the retired, the unemployed, due to longer exposure at home (over seventeen hours) compared to the

working population who are further removed from the airport and receive only nine or ten hours of din,

Sleep deprivation is a big negative consequence of aircraft noise. Since the actual operations of noisy flights occur over our house between the hours of 6:00AM and 11:00PM, we can potentially receive seven hours, assuming sleep occurs quickly, which it does not. Actual sleep time comes closer to five and a half and six hours per night. Our sleep routines are determined by O'Hare's schedule. Additional noise is generated on the airport grounds late at night which includes engine testing, maintenance and other activities.

Closing of diagonal runways is a waste of millions of dollars of taxpayer's money. Is it an admission that the airport plans over the years were/are a serious error?

Regarding the use of "averages" applied to noise contours and decibels, as applied by the FAA is a distortion of mathematics. Their figures are cherry-picked. The true average should include only the hours of flights in total and not the periods when no flights occur. This concept of "average" is like saying that a man partially submerged in boiling oil is on average pain free, since less than half of his body is emersed.

The term "Fly Quiet" used by the FAA is an ironic oxymoron. We would suggest the motto "Low and Loud".

Not only are property values destroyed, but who would buy a home at the beginning of a runway? Doesn't this constitute a taking without compensation?

In summary, we believe that the disruptive and noisy operations associated with O'Hare is incompatible with the basic rights of citizens on the ground . The accumulative effect of noise over time is devastating.

Why not cancel the modifications plan for O'Hare and build a new airport miles from the Chicago metropolitan area? The funds used for modifications could be used toward building another airport. The new airport could be accessible by bullet trains.

What would you suggest as a solution to our dilemma?

We invite you to our home at any time. The noise impact must be experienced to be believed.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Roy and Laverne Steffens

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Park Ridge, IL 60068

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