



UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT
BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT
NEW YORK STATE SENATE
NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL

April 8, 2010

Michael Bloomberg
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

We write as representatives of communities affected by tourist helicopter traffic over New York City. We are concerned about the safety implications of unregulated tourist helicopter flights, as well as the helicopters' impact on quality of life in neighborhoods that experience take-offs and landings or heavy flyover traffic. These concerns are especially relevant today in the aftermath of the tourist helicopter collision over the Hudson River on August 8, 2009, as well as the ongoing security threat NYC faces and the closing of the 30th Street Heliport. In that context, we write to ask for a comprehensive reexamination of regulation and enforcement of tourist helicopter traffic.

We recently convened a meeting with community leaders from Brooklyn and Manhattan to discuss this serious issue. These communities have lived with the effects of helicopter traffic for decades, and have long advocated for a change in the way that city and federal agencies address helicopter traffic. At the meeting, community members noted many obstacles to resolution of safety and noise concerns, including:

- The lack of verifiable information of the daily volume of helicopters traveling in the Hudson and East River corridors, data that would help the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) fully understand the scope and consequences of New York's helicopter traffic.
- Inadequate mechanisms to track, receive, and respond to constituent complaints and concerns about excessive helicopter noise and traffic when the complaints are filed with 311 and the EDC, which manages the Downtown Heliport.
- The likely increase in tourism helicopter traffic at the Downtown Manhattan Heliport due to the closure of the 30th Street Heliport on the West Side of Manhattan.
- The lack of clarity over the interaction and authority of the City and Federal agencies over the regulation of the tourist helicopter companies, specifically concerning takeoffs and landings of all helicopters, and air traffic at low altitudes.

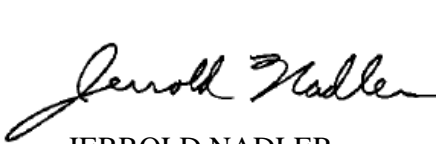
- Security risks associated with the future storage of large quantities of fuel in Lower Manhattan at the Heliport.

To mitigate the consequences the closure of the 30th Street Heliport will have on the Downtown Manhattan Heliport and surrounding area, and to protect the safety of helicopter users and the quality of life of neighborhood residents, we urge you to take the following three steps:

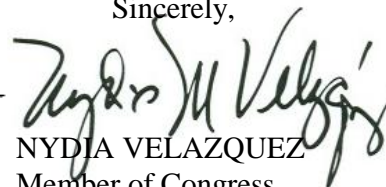
- Implement a well-defined 311 protocol for receiving, responding to and addressing helicopter traffic complaints
- Increase oversight and planning of the helicopter industry, with a focus on reducing, if not eliminating, tourist helicopter traffic.
- Conduct an assessment of the security risks involved in storing fuel at the downtown heliport

The status quo of largely unregulated flights that endanger tourists and disturb the peace in Manhattan and Brooklyn neighborhoods is unacceptable. We believe it is the responsibility of the City to devise a plan, based on the above suggestions, to address this issue. We look forward to working with you to implement these solutions.

Sincerely,



JERROLD NADLER
Member of Congress



NYDIA VELAZQUEZ
Member of Congress



DANIEL SQUADRON
State Senator



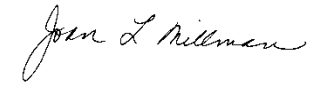
SHELDON SILVER
Speaker of Assembly



SCOTT M. STRINGER
Manhattan Borough President



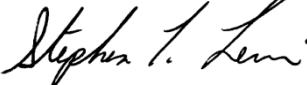
MARTY MARKOWITZ
Brooklyn Borough President



JOAN MILLMAN
Member of the Assembly



MARGARET CHIN
Member of the City Council



STEVE LEVIN
Member of the City Council



GALE BREWER
Member of the City Council

cc: FAA Administrator, J. Randolph Babbitt
FAA Regional Administrator, Carmine Gallo