

Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition

Citizens seeking relief from helicopter noise - A problem for more than 40 years

LAHelicopterNoise.org

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PRESS RELEASE

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Treasurer
Dave Garfinkle
Tarzana Property Owners
Association

FAA DENIES PETITIONS FOR LA HELICOPOTER NOISE RELIEF

George Abrahams
Beachwood Canyon
Neighborhood Association

Los Angeles – Recently, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) denied petitions from the Los Angeles Area Helicopter Noise Coalition (LAAHNC) for regulation of helicopter flights in Los Angeles County to reduce noise and improve safety. After years of talks with the FAA and helicopter operators, we have not been able to reach any agreements on better flight practices. However, in the past three years, the FAA’s Automated Complaint System has accumulated a quarter-million citizen complaints.

Gerry Hans
Friends of Griffith Park

In 2011, the first Los Angeles Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act bills were introduced by our elected representatives in Congress. These and subsequent [bills](#) would have directed the FAA to regulate non-essential helicopter flights, such as tours. They received [support](#) from our elected members of Congress, the State of California, County of Los Angeles, and 21 local cities. However, the FAA’s position is that the best way to handle noise issues is through “collaboration” with helicopter pilots and the local community on “voluntary measures.”

David Rankell
Van Nuys Airport
Citizens Advisory Council

In January, 2014, [Public Law No. 113-76](#) was enacted directing the FAA to evaluate and adjust helicopter routes above Los Angeles to lessen impacts on residential areas and noise-sensitive landmarks. It also directed the FAA to make “significant progress” in the following year or begin the regulatory process. In December, 2014, our congressional delegation [wrote](#) to the FAA asking them to “proceed with a regulatory approach if the stakeholders fail to agree on a voluntary process.”

Donna Sievers
Bluff Heights (Long Beach)
Neighborhood Association

Due to lack of progress, in October, 2015, LAAHNC submitted four petitions to the FAA proposing mandatory regulations for non-essential flights: 1) A minimum flight altitude of 2,000 feet above ground level; 2) Limits on hovering time; 3) Pooling of media helicopters covering news events; and 4) A coastal route one-half mile offshore. Seven months later the FAA denied our petitions. In June 2016, we asked the FAA to reconsider. A year-and-one-half later, in January of this year, the FAA finally [denied](#) our requests bringing the petition process to a close.

Gerald A. Silver
Homeowners of Encino

Rudy Whitcomb
Rolling Hills Estates

The only route adjustment implemented by the FAA was in June 2015, when it created new coastal voluntary helicopter routes along the LA County coastline. However, they are only 750 feet offshore (plus or minus 250 feet) with no minimum altitudes. These routes are not sufficient to reduce noise or guarantee the safety of people on the shoreline. The FAA never discussed these routes with us. Moreover, there was no advance public notice or opportunity for comment.

Wayne Williams
Van Nuys Airport
Citizens Advisory Council

An Automated Complaint System was put into place about three years ago for the public in Los Angeles County to file helicopter noise complaints. It has averaged about 7,000 complaints per month and helped document the problem. We continue to meet with pilot representatives monthly to discuss a small sample of offensive flights and, where possible, the representatives attempt to follow-up by talking to the operators of those flights. However, since there are no established rules, individual pilots cannot be held accountable. This system was intended to inform stakeholders and help lead to agreements on needed fundamental reforms. Unfortunately, it has not done so.

Sadly, we have to report that after more than five years of effort we have not been able to achieve significant results through the “collaborative process” and the FAA refuses to establish any regulations. We are willing to consider further dialog, but it does not hold much promise. We will continue to urge the public to call on our elected representatives to hold the FAA accountable for fixing the problem.

Copies of this press release with links to related documents can be found on our home page at LAHelicopterNoise.org.

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