



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR
November 17, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE - 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20590

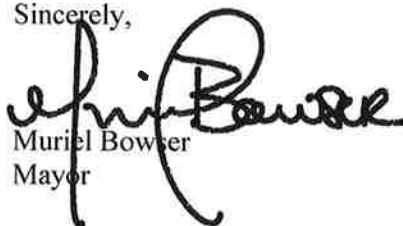
Dear Secretary Chao:

On May 26, 2016, I joined with other Washington, DC leaders to urge the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to mitigate the adverse impacts of aircraft noise resulting from the FAA's implementation of its Next Generation (NextGen) flight procedures. In the attached petition, I expressed great concern with northbound departures from Ronald Reagan Washington Airport (DCA) that have caused a substantial increase in aircraft noise for residents of Foggy Bottom, Georgetown, Burleith, Colony Hill, Foxhall, Palisades and neighboring communities near the Potomac River since early 2015.

My staff was led to understand that the FAA was seeking to address this issue by proposing alterations in the northbound departure procedure known as LAZIR. I was surprised to learn recently that the FAA has decided to cease work on its "LAZIR B" initiative. It has instead suggested it will refer the issue of an alternative to LAZIR to the DCA Working Group, a group of residents from the District, Maryland, and Virginia (<https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/communityengagement/dca/>). However, with all due respect to the DCA Working Group, it lacks the technical expertise required to address the complex issue of flight path design, and the FAA should not seek to escape responsibility for solving a problem it, and it alone, created.

Accordingly I respectfully request that you instruct the FAA to revert immediately to the northbound departure procedure in effect for decades at DCA prior to 2015. If the FAA desires to mimic that procedure with a NextGen flight path – which it has communicated to members of the DCA Working Group that it has the capability to do – then it should do so now after the required notice and comment period. The FAA, not the DCA Working Group, has the obligation to undo the damage it has created with its LAZIR departure procedure.

Sincerely,


Muriel Bowser
Mayor

Cc: The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, Congresswoman
The Honorable Phil Mendelson, Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

Encl: Petition to Federal Aviation Administration, Michael Huerta, Administrator, dated May 27, 2016