

[The following press release was originally published on Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton's website at [https://norton.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/norton-lynch-quigley-suozzi-lead-quiet-skies-caucus-request-for-addition.](https://norton.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/norton-lynch-quigley-suozzi-lead-quiet-skies-caucus-request-for-addition)]

Norton, Lynch, Quigley, Suozzi Lead Quiet Skies Caucus Request for Addition of Five Community Representatives to NextGen Advisory Committee

Apr 26, 2022 | Press Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Quiet Skies Caucus (QSC) Co-Chairs Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Congressman Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Vice Chairs Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL) and Congressman Tom Suozzi (D-NY) led QSC members in sending a letter to Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg requesting the addition of five community representatives to the NextGen Advisory Committee (NAC), which advises the Federal Aviation Administration, as part of NAC's June 2022 charter renewal.

"None of the members represent communities that live under NextGen corridors and that are directly impacted by the recommendations of the NAC," the letter said. "To better fulfill NAC's mission, we recommend adding five more seats to the committee, to be filled by representatives who can speak on behalf of affected communities."

The letter follows.

April 20, 2022
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We, members of the Quiet Skies Caucus, write to request that you direct the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to add five community representatives to the NextGen Advisory Committee (NAC) as part of the June 2022 NAC charter renewal.

The mission of the NAC is to provide independent advice and recommendations to the FAA relating to operations that affect the future of the Air Traffic Management System.^[1] The 30 members of the NAC represent multiple airline operators, aircraft manufacturers, industry associations and government agencies such as the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.^[2] Only one member represents environmental stakeholders. None of the members represent communities that live under NextGen corridors and that are directly impacted by the recommendations of the NAC. To better fulfill NAC's mission, we recommend adding five more seats to the committee, to be filled by representatives who can speak on behalf of affected communities.

There is precedent for the FAA expanding membership on an advisory committee. For example, the Advanced Aviation Advisory Committee, formerly known as the Drone Advisory Committee, recently expanded its membership from 35 to 41 members as part of its charter amendment.^[3] This was done in part to include "a community advocate representative to provide insight and expertise on potential impacts of increased drone traffic on communities."^[4]

Hearing directly from affected communities is essential. The NAC and the FAA rely on the use of the Day-Night average sound level (DNL) standard to assess the impact of their recommendations on communities. However, a recent Government Accountability Office (GAO) study found that because the DNL combines into a single metric "both the amount of noise from each aircraft operation, as well as the average annual flights per day at a given location, the same DNL may be associated with vastly different numbers of flights above that location."^[5] The GAO concluded that the DNL standard does not fully convey the noise created by flights overhead.^[6] Having community representatives on the NAC would enable the committee to better assess the on-the-ground impact of their recommendations.

We request a written response by May 4, 2022. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress
Quiet Skies Caucus Chair

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress
Quiet Skies Caucus Co-Chair

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

Sean Casten
Member of Congress

Jason Crow
Member of Congress

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

Henry "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress
Quiet Skies Caucus Chair

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress
Quiet Skies Caucus Co-Chair

Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

Joe Neguse
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

[1] "NextGen Advisory Committee," Federal Aviation Administration (last updated Dec. 27, 2021) https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ang/nac

[2] NextGen Advisory Committee, "Membership List," Federal Aviation Administration (Feb. 22, 2021) https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ang/NA_C_Membership.pdf

[3] "Advanced Aviation Advisory Committee," Federal Aviation Administration (last updated Feb. 25, 2022) [https://www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/advanced_aviation_advisory_committee/#:~:text=The%20charter%20amendment%20\(%20PDF%20\)%20modified,members%20with%20an%20AAM%20background.](https://www.faa.gov/uas/programs_partnerships/advanced_aviation_advisory_committee/#:~:text=The%20charter%20amendment%20(%20PDF%20)%20modified,members%20with%20an%20AAM%20background.)

[4] *Id.*

[5] "Aircraft Noise: FAA Could Improve Outreach through Enhanced Noise Metrics, Communication, and Support to Communities," United States Government Accountability Office (Sept. 2021) <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-21-103933.pdf>

[6] *Id.* at 37.