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# ***Airport Noise Report***



A weekly update on litigation, regulations, and technological developments

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## ***Community Alliance***

### **AICA ASKS BUTTIGIEG TO ADD GRASSROOTS GROUPS TO NOISE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The ever-growing Aviation-Impacted Communities Alliance (AICA) urged Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg in a July 18 letter to direct the FAA to include its grassroots community members on FAA advisory committees and in community engagement activities required under the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024.

Their letter comes as FAA is in the process of assembling an Aviation Noise Advisory Committee (ANAC) as required by Section 792 of the FAA Reauthorization Act, which was signed into law on May 16.

The Advisory Committee must be up and running by Nov. 12 and must include representatives of engine manufacturers, air carriers, airport owners or operators, aircraft manufacturers, advanced air mobility manufacturers or operators; and institutions of higher education; as well as “representatives of airport-adjacent communities from geographically diverse regions.”

It is unclear who added the language limiting community representatives to those from “airport-adjacent” communities but that requirement flies in the face of AICA’s assertion that input from communities farther from airports under NextGen flight paths.

AICA has expanded recently from a coalition of around 70 members to 91 grassroots community groups in 16 states (AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, FL, HI, LA, MA, MD, NJ, NY, OR, PA, and WA).

### **AICA Wants Four Seats on Advisory Committee**

AICA told Secretary of Transportation Buttigieg, “Sufficient representation of communities for Sec.792. ANAC would be a minimum of four members to cover the

purview of the noise policy, who collectively have in-depth understanding of and are substantially and directly impacted by Commercial Aviation and General Aviation including extensive NextGen overflights (SIDS, STARS and Approaches), helicopter flights, flight training, and near airport issues from geographically diverse regions.

“The community representatives should have no financial conflict of interest for aviation related individual or private organization gain from the FAA , include both Roundtable and Non-Roundtable members, have not served as previous FAA Advisory Committee members representing community or environmental stakeholders, and have a proven track record of working with impacted communities and grassroots organizations.

“Furthermore, two health experts should be members of the committee per Sec.792. ANAC ‘at least 1 representative of each of...institutions of higher education’. We recommend an emissions expert as well as a physical and mental health expert who are currently or previously affiliated with institutions of higher education; have published articles on the impacts of aircraft noise and/or emissions on health; have served on academic, government and community committees addressing adverse effects of noise on health; and have experience working with communities affected by aircraft noise.

“In addition to Sec.792. ANAC, sufficient grassroots community inclusion is needed in [other] FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 provisions:

- Sec.786. Part 150 Noise Standard Update – community feedback;
- Sec.793. Community Collaboration Program – interviews and recommendations solicited from impacted residents adversely impacted, and;
- Sec.916. Unmanned and Autonomous Flight Advisory Committee (UAFAC) – community advocate member.

“Both Sec.792. ANAC and Sec. 916. UAFAC will likely operate as Federal Advisory Committees in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requiring Federal advisory committees “to be fairly balanced in terms of the points of view represented and the functions to be performed by the advisory committee.” 5 U.S.C. app. 2 § 5.

“The FACA provision clearly asserts the intent of sufficient representation by impacted communities and not just or overly weighted by aviation interests.”

The Aircraft Noise Advisory Committee will play a crucial role in FAA’s review of its aviation noise policy. The Advisory Committee is tasked with:

- (1) Evaluating existing research on aircraft noise impacts and annoyance;
- (2) Assessing alternative noise metrics that could be used to supplement or replace the existing Day Night Level standard, in consultation with the National Academies;

- (3) Evaluating the current 65-decibel exposure threshold, including the impact to land use compatibility around airports if such threshold was lowered;
- (4) Evaluating current noise mitigation strategies and the community engagement efforts by the FAA with respect to changes in airspace utilization, such as the integration of new entrants and usage of performance-based navigation; and
- (5) Other duties determined appropriate by the FAA Administrator.

Not later than one year after the date of its establishment, the Advisory Committee must submit to the FAA Administrator a report on any recommended changes to current aviation noise policies.

The AICA told Buttigieg:

“We believe that sufficient community representation by aviation-impacted community representatives would increase the likelihood of successful outcomes for FAA initiatives and support a national airspace system that works for all. Members of our AICA groups nationwide have qualified individuals ready to serve on FAA Advisory Committees and provide thoughtful feedback from the impacted community perspective for 2024 FAA Reauthorization provisions.”

The AICA’s letter to Buttigieg is attached to the email that brought you this issue of ANR.