

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 20, 2010

J. Randolph Babbitt
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Babbitt:

We are writing to urge the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to produce a thorough Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) examining flight traffic at Santa Monica Airport (SMO).

As you know, SMO is a uniquely situated airport directly abutting densely populated neighborhoods. Both sides of the airport's single runway face homes as close as 250 feet. The dramatic rise in traffic at the airport in recent years, particularly among large business jets, has elevated community concerns about safety, noise and pollution.

Sensitivity about SMO traffic has most recently been heightened following a test initiated by the FAA in December 2009 to change the flight path of certain SMO departures to separate traffic from flights departing Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in order to reduce aircraft idling times at both airports. Regrettably, the FAA failed to conduct meaningful community outreach about the goals and objectives or the expected impact of the 6-month test. While supporters of the test welcomed the air quality improvements associated with reduced idling, the Santa Monica Airport staff also received thousands of complaints from residents living in the vicinity of the tested flight-path.

It is imperative that the FAA produce a complete and thorough EIS and hold public meetings to explain the purpose and results of the recent flight-path test, hear from affected homeowners and assess the broader safety, noise and air quality impacts of air traffic in the midst of densely populated neighborhoods. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress


JANE HARMAN
Member of Congress