

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2019

Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We write to you with renewed concerns about non-essential helicopter flights over New York City's densely populated neighborhoods in light of the fatal crash of an Agusta A109E helicopter onto the roof of the AXA Equitable Building on June 10, 2019. As you know, the crash resulted in the death of pilot Tim McCormack and ignited a multiple-alarm fire. We have written to you numerous times since the start of your Administration to take action to limit the impact helicopters have, not only on quality of life, but also the safety and health of our constituents. That is why we were encouraged to hear on June 14, 2019, your statement on WNYC that you support a ban of non-essential helicopters over Manhattan. We believe it is time to end non-essential helicopter flights over all of New York City and request a meeting with you to discuss this matter as soon as possible.

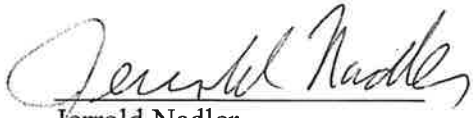
On June 21, 2019, we wrote to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Acting Administrator Daniel K. Elwell, requesting that the FAA immediately ban all non-essential helicopter flights and immediately institute Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR) on helicopter flights over New York City. New York City is known to have among the most extensive utilization of helicopter services in the world. Furthermore, New York City is the largest and one of the most densely populated cities in the United States, which exponentially increases the potential lethality of a helicopter accident over the city. The high volume of helicopter flights over New York City poses an unacceptable public safety risk to our community and negatively impacts residents' quality of life. There is no justification for allowing tourists to joy-ride through our skies, endangering people below and adding to the heavy burden of noise pollution residents must endure.

Since 1980, there have been at least 30 helicopter crashes in New York City, many of which have been fatal.¹ Unfortunately, despite these incidents, the FAA has failed to sufficiently act. Thankfully, New York City doesn't need to wait for the FAA to take action. As New York City is the owner of the Downtown Manhattan Heliport and 34th Street Heliport, it is within your authority to end concession contracts at these heliports for non-essential flights. This action would significantly reduce non-essential flights over New York City airspace. Our communities have lived through the potential danger generated by an industry that has operated nearly


¹ National Transportation Safety Board. Aviation Accident Database & Synopses. Retrieved June 25, 2019, from https://www.nts.gov/_layouts/nts.aviation/index.aspx

unfettered for decades. We believe it is a matter of utmost urgency that your administration addresses this matter as soon as possible. Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

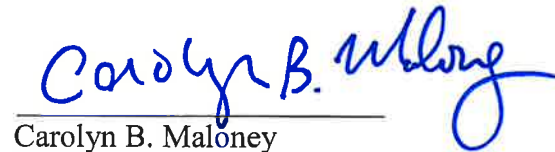
Sincerely,




Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress




Nydia Velázquez
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
New York State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Phil Murphy
Governor of New Jersey
Office of the Governor
125 W State St
Trenton, NJ 08608