

Statement of the Honorable Doris O. Matsui  
Subcommittee on Aviation Hearing: "Aviation and the Environment: Noise"  
Wednesday, October 24, 2007

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Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today. As our country grows increasingly concerned about the environmental impacts of policies that are made here in Washington, it will be crucial for this subcommittee to stay at the forefront of this debate.

I know that my constituents in Sacramento are focused on the environment. They sent me here to pass laws that protect what is left of the natural world.

They want us to accomplish this without impacting their day-to-day lives to a great degree, which is the main part of our challenge as policymakers.

When it comes to the noise generated by my city's airports, however, my constituents are lucky. Our main airport, Sacramento International, has a very small noise footprint.

In fact, there are no residential areas in my district that are adversely impacted by aircraft noise from Sacramento International's operations.

This arrangement has not come without a price, Mr. Chairman. Our airport is about a half-hour-trip from the center of the city, and even longer from some of the residential parts where my constituents live.

While it is advantageous that our airport is located outside the city limits, it can be difficult to access as a result.

What is <sup>happening though</sup> encouraging—and what gives me pause at the same time—is that this could soon change. Many new families are moving to my district, Mr. Chairman. Acreage that used to be open space is being rapidly developed to make room for these new arrivals. As development inches closer and closer to our main airport, noise abatement will become a more important issue in Sacramento.

Moving forward, it will be critical for local governments in my district to make responsible, effective land use decisions. They should not have to do this alone, Mr. Chairman. The federal government can and should be a positive partner in making land use policy.

This is particularly true when it comes to aircraft noise issues. My constituents will call upon Congress to fix noise problems that might develop down the line, so we should be involved in this in a constructive way from the beginning.

For this reason, I am eager to hear today's testimony, particularly as it pertains to land use. I am especially interested in learning how other cities and suburbs across the country have addressed the issue of aircraft noise.

Armed with the knowledge that experts in this area have acquired in the last few years, I am certain that my district will continue to be a place that encourages air travel without harming the environment.

I would like to thank today's witnesses for coming here today to offer their testimony. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for convening today's panel. I yield back the balance of my time.