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Executive Director

February 23, 2021

Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Congratulations on your Senate confirmation as Secretary of Transportation. We appreciate the dedication and enthusiasm you bring to your role and we look forward to the Biden administration's initiatives on investing in our transportation infrastructure as we "build back better."

**Members:**

Addison  
Arlington Heights  
Bartlett  
Bensenville  
Bloomington  
Chicago  
Chicago Wards  
36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45  
Cook County  
Des Plaines  
Downers Grove  
DuPage County  
Elmhurst  
Elmwood Park  
Franklin Park  
Glenview  
Hanover Park  
Harwood Heights  
Hoffman Estates  
Itasca  
Lincolnwood  
Maywood  
Melrose Park  
Mount Prospect  
Niles  
Norridge  
Northlake  
Palatine  
Park Ridge  
River Forest  
River Grove  
Rolling Meadows  
Rosemont  
Schaumburg  
Schiller Park  
South Barrington  
St. Charles  
Stone Park  
Wayne  
Wood Dale

**School Districts:**

2, 7, 48, 59, 63, 64, 80, 81, 84,  
84.5, 85.5, 86, 87, 88, 89, 100,  
205, 207, 214, 234, 299, 401

An important part of that infrastructure is air transportation, and Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. I currently serve as chair of the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission, an inter-governmental advisory organization whose mission is to mitigate aircraft noise through residential and school sound insulation and to advocate for quieter aircraft and aircraft operations. The 66 members of the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) appreciate the economic vitality that O'Hare International Airport brings to our communities and to the region. However, with that prosperity comes aircraft noise over our communities.

For 25 years, ONCC has worked collaboratively and diligently with the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), the airlines, and state and federal lawmakers to raise awareness of the impact of aircraft noise on students and families within the O'Hare region and bring about change for a better quality of life.

We know that O'Hare holds a special place for you and Chasten, and through the years you most likely have been able to take advantage of our new, safe, and efficient runways. The O'Hare Modernization Plan (OMP), approved by the FAA in 2005, set into motion the reconfiguration of the entire O'Hare airfield, leading to increased capacity and greater efficiency. What had been a network of intersecting, diagonal runways has been largely replaced by a series of east/west parallel runways. This has led to significant reduction in delays and more predictable airline operations, better able to handle weather and atmospheric conditions.

However, those new runways bring new flightpaths and heightened noise impacts to the residents who live under them. Looking ahead to the completion of the OMP and how that would impact airport operations, ONCC is working closely with the CDA and the FAA. We formed a Fly Quiet Committee to review and adapt the Fly Quiet nighttime noise abatement program to the new runway configuration. The primary goal of the committee is to fairly distribute community noise exposure during the nighttime hours and establish predictability by putting in place a runway rotation plan that utilizes all available runways.

The committee's first task was to study improvements to night time flight operations during the OMP construction period. The strategy was to reduce noise exposure and provide predictability through scheduled weekly rotation of preferred night time runways. We conducted three runway rotation tests which led to an Interim Fly Quiet (IFQ) Plan executed in 2019. The resultant FAA-approved IFQ also laid the groundwork for the development of a new permanent Fly Quiet Program to be in place when the OMP is completed at the end of 2021.

***The IFQ was the first runway rotation plan developed by a community advocacy group in the country.***

The CDA applauded the ONCC for dedicating itself to creating a quieter airport for O'Hare's surrounding communities:

*"This innovative approach in addressing noise, an issue all airports face, is yet another thing that makes O'Hare International Airport unique," said CDA Commissioner Jamie L. Rhee. "When developing this program, we wanted to ensure that we worked alongside the people most impacted by airport noise, our neighboring communities. This kind of collaboration is a rarity in the aviation industry, and I am proud to be working toward a solution that everyone can feel good about."*

O'Hare International Airport is a global gateway and economic engine for our region. While the pandemic has reduced air travel, ONCC commends the CDA for its steadfast commitment to the completion of the OMP and continued progress on O'Hare 21, the \$8.5 billion renovation project that includes a new global terminal, satellite concourse, multi-modal improvements, the expansion of Terminal 5, and new hotels and parking.

This fall, ONCC will be celebrating 25 years of aircraft noise relief advocacy. We are honored that the FAA has recognized the Commission as the gold standard and "a national model for advocacy and citizen engagement." We hope that we will be able to celebrate in person with friends and industry colleagues. We invite you to join us in that celebration. We would also like to extend an invitation to meet with our members to learn more about the ONCC and our efforts.

We will stay in touch, and again congratulations!

Sincerely,

Mayor Arlene A. Juracek, ONCC Chair  
Mount Prospect, IL

