



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

**Letitia James**

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September 17, 2014

Bill de Blasio  
Mayor of the City of New York  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

As the Public Advocate for the City of New York, I am writing regarding the safety implications unregulated tourist helicopter traffic is having on communities here in New York City and across the river in New Jersey. A 2004 report to Congress by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) stated that "New York City has spawned the most extensive utilization of helicopter services of any city in the world" New York City's heliports have over 150,000 takeoffs and landings annually. This extensive utilization now adversely impacts the lives of residents in communities across Brooklyn, Staten Island, Manhattan, the Bronx and New Jersey.

Currently, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, working with the FAA, five helicopter tour operators, and the Eastern Region Helicopter Council, have established agreed upon rules to limit the impact of helicopters on the public. This year, a City Council Resolution was introduced calling upon Congress to require the FAA to promulgate regulations on air quality and noise for tourist helicopters.

The solution goes beyond regulation. We must eliminate all tourist flights and traffic from the City owned Downtown Heliport. This position is supported by local, state and federal elected officials. The above referenced report to Congress found that potential health effects on individuals due to community noise exposure included noise-induced hearing impairment, awakening and sleep disturbance, cardiovascular and psychological effects, and mental health effects. As a result of these effects, a ban must be put into place as soon as possible.

The residents of New York City and New Jersey have lived with the effects of helicopter traffic for decades. There is a clear solution to problem and I look forward to working with you to implement that solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Letitia James".

Letitia James  
Public Advocate for the City of New York

cc: FAA Administrator, Michael P. Huerta  
FAA Regional Administrator, Carmine Gallo