



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

A.7638-A/S.7216-A

Stop the Chop NY/NJ enthusiastically supports enactment of A.7638-A/S.7216-A. These bills establish a tax on noise from nonessential helicopter and seaplane flights that do not meet noise standards. Revenue from the tax will be dedicated to New York State's Environmental Protection Fund.

Stop the Chop NY/NJ is the leading bi-state organization whose mission is to eliminate nonessential helicopter flights in the New York City area. There are over 50,000 of these nonessential flights each year from the three NYC-based heliports alone, every one of which emits excessive noise and air pollution. Not only is this detrimental to the quiet enjoyment of our neighborhoods, parks and other public spaces, but it is also damaging to the health of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers. There is clear scientific evidence that helicopter noise increases the risk of heart disease and affects cognition as well as the endocrine, auditory and nervous systems. Helicopters produce between 15 and 40 times the emissions of a passenger car, depending on helicopter model. The average helicopter flight generates about 950 pounds of carbon per hour. Assuming each of the 50,000 unnecessary flights lasts 15 minutes, nearly 12 million pounds of carbon are unnecessarily released into our atmosphere each year. It is for these reasons that Stop the Chop NY/NJ supports these bills, as they will undoubtedly constrain these unneeded flights while improving the health of New Yorkers and improve New York's air quality.

The bills are carefully tailored to address what will undoubtedly be reflexive opposition from the helicopter industry:

- The bills do not ban unnecessary flights outright. Instead, they impose a tax which seeks to compensate the public for the adverse effects of nonessential helicopter flights.
- The bills apply only to nonessential helicopter flights, such as tourist joyrides and commuter flights, and not to essential flights like emergency services, news, military, medical, and other governmental helicopters.

- The bills exempt quiet helicopters. This should create a strong incentive for the helicopter industry to hasten its shift to quieter, non-polluting aircraft such as eVTOLs (electric Vertical Take Off and Landing aircraft). As New York City is beginning to create the infrastructure to support this type of aircraft, these bills should be seen as a complement to those efforts.

Based on current flight volumes of about 50,000 per year, the revenue derived from the tax could be about \$20 million annually and will benefit the environment of communities throughout the state. It is time that the helicopter industry is finally held accountable for the numerous externalities it causes.

Economist Charles Komanoff has estimated that the noise tax will result in a 30 to 50 percent reduction in flights. There are already in place transportation options to locations serviced by the app-based commuter helicopter companies (such as the international airports in NYC and New Jersey, and the Hamptons) that are quieter, safer, and cleaner forms of transportation. We hope these bills will result in expanded public transit options and greener infrastructure, as well as reduced nonessential helicopter traffic.

For the above reasons, the proposed bills should be understood as an important step toward accountability for the helicopter industry, with health and environmental benefits statewide. Stop the Chop NY/NJ strongly supports these bills and urges the State Legislature and the Governor to sign them into law.

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Submitted by the Board of Directors,
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