

TO PHPA MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE HELICOPTER COMMUNITY:

On July 28, 2011, Congressman Howard Berman (North Hollywood- Sherman Oaks) proposed a new bill called "The Los Angeles Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act of 2011", H.R. 2677. On December 16, 2011, Senator Dianne Feinstein introduced S.8739, a Senate "companion" version of the bill Howard Berman introduced in the House.

Both bills would **require** the FAA, within one year at the earliest and three years at the latest, to issue regulations to **restrict helicopter flight paths and set minimum altitudes** over Los Angeles residential areas. (Copies of all this legislation and more can be found in the attached documents. The PHPA will add Legislative Information to this website as it arises.)

PLEASE JOIN US -- CONTACT YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE -- STATE YOUR OPPOSITION TO H.R. 2677 AND S. 8739.

Both these bills are written with a disturbing lack of understanding about the complex regulations already in place controlling the L.A. airspace. Sen. Feinstein's bill reads "...Under current law, helicopter pilots can and do fly practically wherever they want above Los Angeles, and no agency limits their activity... Bottom Line: This is, for all intents and purposes, **an unregulated industry.**"

The Senate bill derides Los Angeles stating: "Downtown L.A. has a helicopter parking lot in the clouds; helipads lie atop nearly every skyscraper." In fact, the vast majority of the landing sites on buildings downtown are Emergency Helicopter Landing Facilities (EHLFs), *required* by Los Angeles Municipal law. There is no "helicopter parking lot in the clouds". No individual is authorized to land on these sites except Police and Fire in an emergency.

And while these bills purport to reduce noise, both bills would exempt all helicopters flown by our colleagues in public agencies such as L.A. Fire, Police, Sheriffs, DWP, etc. With the many missions these agencies fly, day and night, in sometimes larger and heavier aircraft than private helicopter operators fly, their exemption would insure that the net effect of all this legislation in providing actual reduction of noise affecting the population on the ground would be negligible. These regulations would not solve the "problem" they set out to solve.

Instead, these bills could potentially create changes impacting safety, possibly legislating helicopters to fly higher, **bringing us ever closer to airplane traffic.**

Yet, this flawed legislation gathers steam. Since the Berman bill was proposed in July 2011:

- A resolution **in support of it is introduced into the LA City Council.** This resolution has not yet been voted on.
- On August 15, 2011, **the West Hollywood City Council passes a resolution supporting the Berman Bill.**
- On November 8, 2011, **the LA County Board of Supervisor supports the Berman Bill without objection.**
- On December 16, 2011 **Senator Feinstein introduces bill S. 8739**, her Senate version of the House bill H.R. 2677 introduced by Berman.
- On December 20, 2011, **the City of Rancho Palos Verdes votes unanimously to support the Berman Bill H.R. 2677** and sends a letter to Congress stating: "H.R. 2677...could have a significant positive impact on the residents... Rancho Palos Verdes attracts a significant number of commercial and private helicopters due to its miles of coastline and spectacular topography. Additionally, it is in close proximity to Torrance Airport which is home to a major helicopter manufacturer and a large fleet of helicopters."

It is clear: **many parties are lining up together to pass the Berman and Feinstein Bills.**

WHAT THE PHPA IS DOING

- On October 6, 2011, PHPA President Larry Welk, LAPD Command Pilot Greg Duran, Board Member Linda Satorius and Legal Counsel Ricarda Bennett met with Beachwood Canyon and The Oaks Homeowners Associations to discuss noise and the airspace around the Hollywood sign.
- In September 2011, Larry Welk went to the Helicopter Association International (HAI) Eastern Regional Council in New Jersey for fact finding about their responses to the compulsory flight level restrictions over Long Island planned for in Sen. Charles Schumer's (NY) amendment to "The FAA Reauthorization and Reform" Bill, S.223. The Schumer Amendment is the model for the Berman Bill.
- October 27, 2011, Larry went to Washington D.C. representing the PHPA members in talks with Congressional representatives and HAI.
- January 19, 2012, Larry will represent the PHPA at a joint meeting of Valley homeowners' associations and helicopter pilots brought together by Howard Berman's office.
- January 20-21, 2012, Larry will be a featured speaker on various topics including legislation and helicopter noise at the upcoming HAI-FAA-PHPA Safety Meeting in Van Nuys, CA.

The PHPA is working hard to protect our flying privileges and livelihoods. Now it is time for you to weigh in.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Reach out to your representatives. Write, call, e-mail them. (Contact info for many representatives is in the PDF attachment.) Let them know the other side of the story. Our representatives have received massive amounts of one-sided media pieces written without firsthand information from helicopter operators. The word "cowboy" gets used a lot. So does "hotshot". There is a general disparagement of helicopters and a lack of recognition of the outstanding record of safety and professionalism of those who fly in Los Angeles. Contact your representatives and tell them how you feel and how these bills will affect you.

If possible, meet face-to-face. The more personal the contact the more effective it will be. Call them. Send a letter or an e-mail. (Be sure to include your contact information so your e-mail doesn't appear to be completely anonymous. Their staff may ignore communication without some contact information.)

A fast way to register your concerns is to go to:

The HOUSE bill: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h112-2677>

The SENATE bill: <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s112-2019>

Click on the "Speak Up at Popvox" button, another window will automatically open to send your opposition to the bill and a dialogue box will open to write a message to your representative. If possible, include some contact information so they know they're not being spammed.

If you belong to AOPA, NBAA, or GAMA, tell them your concerns, we are all in this together. The contact information for **HAI Government Affairs Assistant Sterling Wiggins** is sterling.wiggins@rotor.com.

However you connect with your representatives, please call the PHPA at (323) 929-7472 and tell us. It will help us to know who you've contacted. If possible, copy us on letters and "cc" us on e-mails using "info@phpa.org".

There is still time to be heard on this legislation. But the time to speak up is now.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to hearing from you. Fly safe.

The PHPA Board of Directors

Attachments:

1. Berman Legislation Summary 122811.pdf
2. S.2019 SENATE Companion to Berman Bill HR2677.pdf
3. Contact Info-How to contact Representatives who support the LA Helicopters Noise Relief Act.pdf