

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

We write as members of the Virginia Congressional Delegation representing the community surrounding Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD) to bring attention to aviation noise, operational concerns, and safety concerns at the airport. We request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) establish a Working Group to respond to these concerns and the recommendations that have been put forward by local stakeholders to address them.

Dulles Airport is a highly trafficked airport serving the National Capital Region. It handles hundreds of thousands of aircraft movements and millions of passengers per year and is surrounded by densely populated residential areas. Aircraft departing from or arriving at Dulles Airport routinely overfly communities in Northern Virginia, Washington D.C., and Maryland, subjecting residents to persistent aviation noise.

At Dulles Airport, 68% of departures take off from the east-west Runway 30, and the departure procedure off Runway 30 results in a low altitude turn immediately after takeoff.¹ Aircraft weighing over 300,000 pounds routinely fly over residential neighborhoods at low altitudes, including the aircraft with the highest maximum take-off weight in the world, generating significant aviation noise.² However, the concerns extend beyond noise. In the past two years, there have been six reports of engine failures at Dulles Airport shortly after takeoff. One incident ignited a significant brush fire on airport property, and another resulted in a crash landing on Loudoun County Parkway.^{3,4} This presents a growing risk to communities in Northern Virginia.

In response to these concerns and at the direction of the FAA's Eastern Region Administrator, Loudoun County led the Runway 30 Aviation Noise Mitigation Project, which concluded in December 2025. The project produced three recommendations to the FAA to reduce aviation noise over residential neighborhoods while also improving safety and supporting efficient flight operations. These recommendations are:

1. Implement Noise Abatement Departure Procedure (NADP-1) on all departures off Runway 30;

¹ [2024 Annual Aircraft Noise Report](#)

² [Why The Airbus A380 Has Such A High Takeoff Weight](#)

³ [Flight Returns to Dulles After Engine Cover Breaks Off During Takeoff](#)

⁴ [Plane Makes Emergency Landing on Loudoun Co. Parkway in Virginia](#)

2. Implement a Nighttime Heading procedure requiring aircraft to fly runway heading until leaving 3,000 feet MSL before proceeding on course, and;
3. During daytime hours, consolidate the first two miles of the northwest departure route off Runway 30 over industrial and commercial areas using Area Navigation (RNAV) technology before aircraft turn on course toward their destinations.

These recommendations are supported by affected communities, consistent with practices at major airports across the country, and align with the Administration's stated priority to modernize Dulles Airport.

In response to the recommendations that have been developed and proposed by our constituencies in Northern Virginia, we respectfully request that the Office of the FAA Administrator establish a Working Group, reporting directly to the FAA Deputy Administrator (ADA), to address these pending recommendations, and to elevate the work of the Runway 30 Aviation Noise Mitigation Project. This Working Group would not replace the Runway 30 Aviation Noise Mitigation Project but would be the primary point of contact for the FAA to respond to the past recommendations and ongoing work of this group.

We believe that a Working Group reporting to the Deputy Administrator is the best mechanism to move forward on these recommendations, expedite FAA's review process, and address the noise and operational issues at Dulles Airport. We also request that the ADA become the liaison for aviation noise mitigation efforts to prioritize this issue within the national airspace program, instead of an FAA Regional Administrator. In addition, we request that sufficient staff and resources are provided to expedite the FAA's review of these recommendations.

We ask that the Working Group:


1. Report directly to the ADA;
2. Include participation from the Air Traffic Organization, the Office of Airports, and the Office of Safety;
3. Consider the recommendations made by the Runway 30 Aviation Noise Mitigation Project within a single integrated process;
4. Engage the affected communities, local governments, and relevant carriers as active participants;
5. Operate on an accelerated timeline, with concrete implementation decisions within one year of its establishment; and,
6. Provide quarterly progress reports to Congress.

Washington Dulles International Airport is a critical national asset. The communities of Northern Virginia and the broader region only ask that the systems and procedures governing flight arrivals and departures at Dulles Airport take the effects on the people who live nearby into consideration.


We also want to emphasize that aviation noise is not unique to Dulles Airport, but a national issue affecting communities across the country, including near other airports in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. While we understand that not all aviation noise can be mitigated, we believe that these impacts should be addressed when possible.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and welcome the opportunity to discuss it further.
Please contact our offices to arrange a briefing at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



Tim Kaine
United States Senator