



# Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood Association

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Docket Management Facility  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
West Building Ground Floor  
Room W12-140  
Washington, DC 20590

## **Petition for Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) for the Mount Lee Area**

### **Purpose:**

This proposed rule seeks to provide for the safety and quiet enjoyment of the residents and visitors and other facilities in the Mt. Lee area of the City of Los Angeles (State of California).

Aircraft have been reported flying within a few hundred feet of the hillside homes in this area (boundaries illustrated below). Increasing the minimum distance above the terrain (AGL) to 2,000 feet in this area should produce a noticeable difference in the aircraft sound environment, even if not fully restoring natural quiet to Griffith Park. The Mt. Lee area experiences heavy aircraft traffic as a result of the presence of the Hollywood Sign and tourism it attracts.

### **The Proposed Language for the New Rule**

It shall be unlawful for any fixed wing aircraft or helicopter flying under visual flight rules to fly at an altitude of less than 2,000 feet over the surface bounded by Cahuenga Blvd. West at Barham Blvd., west on Cahuenga Blvd West to Broadlawn Dr., south on Broadlawn Dr. to Multiview Dr., south on Multiview Dr. to Mulholland Dr., south on Mulholland Dr. to Runyon Canyon Rd, south on Runyon Canyon Rd. to Vista St., south on Vista St. to Franklin Ave., east on Franklin Ave. to Western Ave., north on Western Ave. to Los Feliz Blvd., east on Los Feliz Blvd. to Crystal Springs Dr., north on Crystal Springs Dr. to Zoo Dr., west on Zoo Dr. to Forest Lawn Dr., west on Forest Lawn Dr. to Barham Blvd., south on Barham Blvd. to Craig Dr., west on Craig Dr. to Blair Dr., south on Blair Dr. to Barham Blvd., south on Barham Blvd. to Cahuenga Blvd. West.

The term "*surface*" refers to the highest terrain within the area, which is within 2,000 feet laterally of the route of flight.

Exemptions Permitted: helicopter operations related to emergency, law enforcement, or military activities are exempt from requirements described above.

## **Public Interest:**

To reduce hazards from helicopters flying at low altitudes (which does not allow time for recovery or forced landing preparation in the event of a power failure) and noise pollution in residential areas, parks and public venues.

## **Information and Arguments:**

### Environment:

Griffith Park is entitled to natural quiet. Noise has a detrimental impact on wildlife and on animals housed at the Griffith Park Zoo. Noise associated with aircraft overflights is causing a significant adverse effect on the natural quiet experience of the park. In fact, this rule has already been enacted by statute for Yosemite and Haleakala National Parks. Raising the minimum altitude to 2,000 ft (the long standing FAA advisory altitude for overflying parks) reduces egregious impacts and will reduce noise complaints. A 2,000 foot minimum altitude can be effective in limiting some adverse effects on natural quiet.

Similar flight rules to the proposed rule have already been created to control overflights in other areas. (SFAR 50-2 and SFAR 71)

Conclusion 9.5 of SFAR 50.2 states, "The Air Access Coalition sponsored data demonstrate that SFAR 50.2 has reduced aircraft sound levels significantly at some locations..."

The Hollywood Bowl is an important outdoor venue sensitive to noise. Voluntary agreements between the Hollywood Bowl and local helicopter operators have not always been honored during performance season.

### Residential Concerns:

Low flying aircraft are a danger to the residents living in the Mt. Lee area depriving them of the peaceful enjoyment of their property. The terrain of canyons and valleys in this area tend to focus and concentrate aircraft noise to very high decibel levels. Residential complaints include drowning out of normal conversation, vibration of walls of homes and disturbing sleep.

### Safety:

The Mt. Lee area consists mostly of hilly terrain with steep canyons and no safe areas to land in emergencies.

On March 24, 1998, a helicopter crashed in our area. See the L.A. Times article<sup>1</sup> and the graphic YouTube video animation<sup>2</sup> of the crash.

This event illustrates the danger of helicopters flying at low altitude in this area.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.lafire.com/lastalarm\\_file/1998-0323\\_Mccomb\\_Reiner\\_Butler/newspaperarticles/032498\\_fire3\\_latimes.htm](http://www.lafire.com/lastalarm_file/1998-0323_Mccomb_Reiner_Butler/newspaperarticles/032498_fire3_latimes.htm)

<sup>2</sup><http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quIKOTkvuxE>

Currently, there is legislation before Congress (HR 2677) that will require by statute that this rule be implemented within a one-year period from the date of enactment.

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**July 28, 2011**

*Mr. BERMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure*

**A BILL**

*To direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration to issue regulations to reduce helicopter noise pollution in residential areas of Los Angeles County, California, and for other purposes.*

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

*This Act may be cited as the 'Los Angeles Residential Helicopter Noise Relief Act of 2011'.*

**SEC. 2. RESIDENTIAL HELICOPTER NOISE RELIEF.**

*(a) Regulations Required- Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall issue regulations for helicopter operations in Los Angeles County, California, that include requirements relating to the flight paths and altitudes associated with such operations to reduce helicopter noise pollution in residential areas.*

*(b) Exemptions Permitted- In issuing regulations under subsection (a), the Administrator may exempt helicopter operations related to emergency, law enforcement, or military activities from requirements described in such subsection.*

Respectfully submitted,

Fran Reichenbach  
President

George Abrahams  
Tourism Committee Chair