



NEWS From Assemblyman 1st Assembly District **Marc Alessi**

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Alessi applauds Sen. Schumer's efforts to combat helicopter noise

New hotline gives Suffolk residents a way to log complaints

Assemblyman Marc S. Alessi (D-Wading River) stood behind Senator Charles Schumer today as he announced a plan to remedy the noise pollution caused by low-flying helicopters over Long Island. The plan calls for higher-altitude, less-disruptive flight paths and a new telephone hotline for residents to report noncompliant helicopters.

“This is a huge step toward permanently turning down the volume on the helicopter racket,” said Alessi. “The noise pollution caused by the low altitude of helicopters has become much more than a nuisance – it has become a quality of life issue for many Long Islanders. Thankfully, the new agreement to fly at higher altitudes, coupled with a toll-free number to ensure accountability, will help us keep the peace.”

While the majority of helicopter operators serving Long Island have already agreed to follow less-intrusive, higher-elevation flight paths – with the others soon to be mandated to do the same by the Federal Aviation Administration – the plan will provide Suffolk County with its own hotline, allowing residents to report helicopters not abiding by the regulations. Complaint data will be compiled in order to issue weekly and monthly reports to both airports and helicopter operators.

“The voluntary efforts of the Eastern Region Helicopter Council and East End airports to adapt to public concern is much appreciated and very encouraging,” said Alessi. “At the same time, I’m pleased that the hotline will allow residents to serve as a second line of defense. If the flight restrictions are not being followed, and if the disturbing din produced by low-flying helicopters continues, residents can hold helicopter operators accountable by simply picking up the phone.”

Alessi has long worked to mitigate the adverse effects of low-flying helicopters on Suffolk County residents. He has repeatedly written to the Department of Transportation requesting intervention and has sponsored a bill that would increase minimum safe altitudes for helicopters and also increase the penalties for the failure to obey the new regulations. Alessi notes that the collaborative efforts of Senator Schumer to broker a deal with the helicopter industry and to establish the hotline will effectively combat the growing problem.

“As the warm weather rapidly approaches and with it, an increase in helicopter traffic, we must be persistent in our efforts to establish safe flight routes that preserve the peace for Long Island residents,” said Alessi. “I am so grateful to Senator Schumer for his attention to this matter and for his willingness to partner with all levels of government to come to a solution that works for air travelers and Long Island residents alike.”

Suffolk’s own toll-free number is expected before Memorial Day and until then, all complaints should be directed to the helicopter council at 845-353-6050, the East Hampton Airport at 631-537-1130, or the Gabrieski Airport at 631-852-8095.