

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
BY ED BOLEN
PRESIDENT AND CEO
NATIONAL BUSINESS AVIATION ASSOCIATION (NBAA)**

SUBMITTED TO THE

**U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Subcommittee on Aviation
On**

**Hearing:
“Aviation Noise: Measuring Progress in Addressing Community
Concerns”**

March 17, 2022

National Business Aviation Association
1200 G Street NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

For further information contact:

Alex Gertsen
Director, Airports & Ground Infrastructure
(202) 737-4477
agertsen@nbaa.org

Chairman DeFazio, Ranking Member Graves and members of the Subcommittee on Aviation, thank you for holding this hearing to focus on the importance of addressing community concerns related to aviation noise. On behalf of the National Business Aviation Association's (NBAA's) 11,000-members, we are pleased to provide this statement for the record.

NBAA's members, rely on business aircraft to meet a significant portion of their transportation needs. The majority of business aircraft are operated by small businesses and are primarily used to provide access to airports supporting communities that aren't served by the commercial airlines. While the airlines serve only around 500 airports, business aviation can reach 5,000 public use airports across the United States. These facilities are also economic engines for the cities and towns that they serve and our members and the general aviation industry have a great stake in the airports being good neighbors to the surrounding communities and in ensuring their viability and accessibility.

The United States leads the world in having the most robust and diverse airport infrastructure capabilities, providing a critical foundation for general aviation to thrive. In transporting people and equipment, responding to natural disasters, providing air medical flights for organs and patients, offering a place for flight training and a base for the inspiration and inception of career paths essential for all sectors of aviation – general aviation relies on the national network of airports. To fulfill these roles, our airports rely on unimpeded access by aircraft of all types and sizes. Operations of these aircraft also support a vast variety of jobs at a broad range of income levels across the country. Additionally, these operations are a vital source of local revenue and thus help our general aviation airports be self-sustaining. Continued federal support of airports, and in particular protecting access, is critical so that airports can not only fulfill today's demands, but also handle tomorrow's requirements as well.

NBAA places great emphasis on Fly Neighborly initiatives and community engagement, recognizing the importance of mitigating aviation noise impacts to those on the ground. Through the collaborative efforts of its Access Committee, NBAA has developed Noise Abatement Procedures (www.nbaa.org/noise) that can be used by aircraft operators at all airports that do not have a specific local procedure. NBAA partners with local and regional aviation organizations and works closely with a number of airports and surrounding communities around the country to develop and promote voluntary noise abatement programs and procedures to mitigate impacts of aviation noise.

The industry has a long history of working with airports and the communities to develop and implement voluntary noise abatement programs specific to individual airports around the country. These fly neighborly programs embrace procedures for all types of aircraft and include mitigations such as flying at higher altitudes and maximizing flight paths over water and least populated areas as much as possible and reducing operations during night hours. The programs are designed to be evaluated and enhanced through continued collaboration on a regular basis and consistently demonstrate very high participation from the operators. We continue to be engaged in fly-neighborly efforts at Van Nuys Airport (VNY), Santa Monica Airport (SMO) and John Wayne Orange County Airport (SNA) in Southern California, Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (BJC) in the Denver, Colorado area, Teterboro Airport (TEB) in New Jersey, Brookhaven Calabro Airport (HWV) as well as East Hampton Airport (HTO) on Long Island and Montgomery County Airpark (GAI) in Maryland to highlight a few.

The Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen), the FAA-led modernization of America's air transportation system, has become another tool to manage impacts of aviation noise on the communities. NextGen leverages new technologies and procedures to increase the safety, efficiency, capacity, access, flexibility, predictability, and resilience of the National Airspace System (NAS) while reducing the environmental effect of aviation. Business aviation operators have embraced these technologies and

procedures and have invested in equipping their aircraft with the avionics necessary to take advantage of the benefits NextGen offers and to enhance their ability to fly neighborly. Teterboro Airport (TEB) in New Jersey is a great example. TEB has recently developed and is in the process of implementing a NextGen instrument approach procedure that is an alternative to the traditional Instrument Landing System (ILS) straight-in approach path. The procedure can be used during certain times and in appropriate weather conditions to offset the flight paths and offer noise relief to the communities as the result.

Additionally, the general aviation industry has invested significantly in developing quieter aircraft yielding substantial accomplishments. Aircraft that are currently being manufactured are quieter and more efficient than those in operation, as the industry consistently has made strides in continued development and implementation of noise reduction technologies.

Unfortunately, despite these efforts by the industry and operators, a small number of communities have made attempts to impose restrictions limiting access, such as curfews, weight and noise limits, on their airports. Your continued support of federal grant-based and deed-based obligations and compliance with the Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990 (ANCA), and of other aviation statutes and regulations, play an important role in preventing these local patch-quilt operational restrictions and even complete airport closures.

Notably, by enacting ANCA, Congress affirmed that aviation should be federally regulated, and stopped the wide-spread of local noise restrictions that had begun to threaten the efficiency and safety of our nation's airports and airspace. ANCA provides an effective process for scrutinizing noise and other access restrictions that is managed by the FAA. ANCA and other laws and regulations currently in place have proven successful over the last 30 years, allowing for public input and for airports, air carriers and general aviation operators to thrive in the safest and most efficient NAS in the world. Further, ANCA and the extensive aircraft noise regulation and policy regime of which it is a part, have resulted in tremendous noise reduction, with the number of people exposed to significant levels of aircraft noise in the United States dropping by 94 percent since the late 1970s, even as activity has increased. In addition to voluntary efforts mentioned above, ANCA provides a framework for communities to work with the aviation industry and the FAA to develop additional relief for noise impacted airports. It is essential to the success of our entire National Transportation System that these regulations are not allowed to be circumvented and that the FAA continues to enforce ANCA and other requirements, protecting access.

Today you have the opportunity to hear from Joby Aviation, one of a number of new entrant manufacturers developing aircraft that will usher in the era of electric and hybrid propulsion giving rise to new types of quiet, on demand air transportation. Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) will allow communities around existing airports to further take advantage of this valuable aviation infrastructure, as well as create opportunities to build more facilities to support aircraft with vertical take-off and landing capabilities. Aviation stakeholders recognize that continued community education and engagement are critical in facilitating acceptance and success of AAM.

NBAA supports continuing the commitment to working collaboratively with the airport sponsors, communities surrounding airports and aviation tenants and users in promoting fly neighborly initiatives and voluntary noise abatement programs and procedures. We encourage engagement from local, regional and national elected officials in these initiatives as we all must ensure continued, unhindered access to our national system of airports to meet the current needs and projected growth.

We commend the Subcommittee for recognizing the importance of our airports and look forward to collaboratively working to address the aviation noise challenges to protect access to our Nation's greatest assets – its airports -- and ensure their accessibility and viability. Protecting access and investment in general aviation airports, the backbone of our air transportation system, is critical in ensuring success of general aviation in the near term and for future generations.

Thank you again for holding this important hearing.