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Malliotakis Co-Leads Legislation to Ban Non-Essential Helicopters in NYC

(WASHINGTON, DC) - Congresswoman Nicole Malliotakis along with Congressmen Rob Menendez (D-NJ) and Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), introduced H.R. 3196, *the Improving Helicopter Safety Act*, bipartisan legislation that would ban all non-essential helicopter flights within 20 miles of the Statue of Liberty. The bill is cosponsored by Congresswomen Grace Meng (D-NY), Nydia Velázquez (D-NY), and LaMonica McIver (D-NJ), and is supported by Stop the Chop NY/NJ.

This bipartisan effort comes in response to a recent tragic helicopter crash over the Hudson River that claimed six lives, following decades of helicopter-related incidents in and around New York City. Beyond safety concerns, tourist helicopters continue to disrupt residential communities, particularly throughout Staten Island, due to their frequent low-altitude flights over densely populated neighborhoods at all hours of the day.

“The tragic crash that claimed six lives in the Hudson River isn’t an isolated event, it’s the clearest sign yet of an industry that has operated without meaningful oversight for far too long and continues to pose an unacceptable public safety threat,” **said Congresswoman Nicole Malliotakis.** “Congress must take action, which is why I’m joining my colleagues to introduce this bipartisan legislation to ban non-essential

helicopter traffic within a 20-mile radius of the Statue of Liberty and finally rein in these helicopter tour companies.”

“While we have consistently worked to address the impact of non-essential helicopters on our communities, last month’s tragic crash should be a clarion call for every level of government to take action on helicopter safety,” **said Congressman Rob Menendez**. “Rising congestion of non-essential helicopters, coupled with concerning safety records of air tourism operators, are causing a direct threat to public safety. Along with my colleagues from New Jersey and New York, we’re doing what is necessary to prevent tragedies like this from happening again.”

“The tragic helicopter crash last month on the Hudson River was not an isolated incident; it was the latest in a long line of preventable tragedies in the New York metropolitan region’s increasingly crowded and poorly regulated airspace,” **said Congressman Jerrold Nadler**. “For far too long, non-essential helicopter flights have endangered public safety and shattered the peace of our neighborhoods. I am proud to introduce the bipartisan Improving Helicopter Safety Act with my colleagues Rob Menendez and Nicole Malliotakis to finally put an end to these dangerous flights in our region. We owe it to the victims, and to every resident living beneath these flight paths, to put safety first and prevent future disasters.”

“Stop the Chop NY/NJ commends Representatives Jerry Nadler, Rob Menendez, and Nicole Malliotakis for today’s introduction of the ‘Improving Helicopter Safety Act of 2025’ - common sense federal legislation that will, when passed, finally put an end to the dangerous helicopter conditions in the New York metropolitan area. For too long, tax-paying New Yorkers and Jerseyites have been subjected to excessive noise and air pollution, as well as the safety risks, of endless sightseeing and commuter helicopters flying, often at extremely low altitudes, over our homes, parks, and schools. We have sounded the alarm each time one of these nonessential helicopters has crashed while traversing our densely populated urban areas. However, the FAA has still not addressed the community’s concerns, harms, and pleas for relief. The multiple recent fatal crashes involving helicopters, coupled with the alarming shortage of air traffic controllers, demonstrate the need for immediate reform of the current Wild West-like conditions over NYC and surrounding communities. We also thank the additional Congressional co-sponsors: Representatives Grace Meng, Nydia Velázquez, and LaMonica McIver. This non-partisan issue negatively impacts all who live or work near the NYC and NJ heliports and/or along the helicopter flight paths. It is heartening to see our elected officials joining forces across state lines and party affiliations to end this public harm,” **said Stop The Chop NY/NJ**.

At her April 24 press conference, Congresswoman Malliotakis shared that her office has been in contact with the FAA, having met with FAA Eastern Region Administrators last year, and with Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy to relay ongoing concerns from Staten Island residents regarding low-flying helicopter flights with some occurring every 10 to 15 minutes. Malliotakis previously called for tighter regulations, including a ban on non-essential helicopter flights over residential areas in cities with over 5 million people, stricter altitude requirements, enforceable no-fly zones, and a reduction in non-essential flights.

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