

Congressman Rob Menendez Addresses Helicopter Traffic Over Liberty State Park

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Calls for Alternate Flight Routes for Luxury Helicopter Tours

JERSEY CITY, NJ - Congressman Rob Menendez has sent a letter to the National Park Service (NPS) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to designate the entirety of Liberty State Park (LSP) as an avoidance area for helicopter traffic. Last month, the two agencies signed agreements with air tour operators designed to limit commercial air traffic near Ellis Island and Liberty Island. In his letter, Congressman Menendez called these protections inadequate for families who will experience increased noise pollution in and around Liberty State Park.

“Every family deserves to peacefully enjoy the incredible urban jewel that is Liberty State Park - a beloved natural, recreational, and cultural oasis open to all New Jersey residents and visitors,” **said Congressman Rob Menendez.** “The agreements signed by the NPS and FAA will push highly disruptive helicopter traffic towards the park and that is not something I will stand for. Administrator Nolen and Director Sams should protect our park by designating the entirety of LSP as an avoidance area and also consider alternative flight routes that do not bring disruptive flight traffic in close proximity to Hudson County’s waterfront.”

“We are very grateful for Congressman Rob Menendez’s strong and dedicated advocacy to protect the quality of life of all urban residents who use LSP and the enjoyment by all who visit this local, state and national treasure park behind Lady Liberty,” **said Friends of Liberty State Park President Sam Pesin.** “Congressman Menendez’s caring leadership on this severe threat to LSP, as expressed in the 2263 public comments to the NPS, is critical in making the entire LSP an ‘avoidance area’ for tourist helicopters and in urging the wise and practical solution of their flight path to go down the middle of the river/bay.”

In addition to his call for an avoidance area, Congressman Menendez has requested that the NPS and FAA:

1. Provide an analysis of recent changes made to the agreements and how those changes will impact communities in New Jersey's Eighth Congressional District, including impacts to the environment, LSP visitors, and residents.
2. Explain the agencies' decision-making process, including how they analyzed whether commercial air tours governed by the agreements harm the communities under their flight paths.
3. Provide an overview of the agencies' stakeholder engagement in New Jersey prior to entering into these agreements.

Copy of Congressman Menendez's letter to NPS Administrator Charles F. Sams III and FAA Administrator Billy Nolen.