

Press Statement:

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 11, 2017**

**Quiet Skies Puget Sound Gives Mixed Report Card to Des Moines**  
*Acknowledges progress, but much more to do on new jet noise and health issues*

Last week, the City of Des Moines posted a statement reporting upon its progress relating addressing “the brunt of disproportionate impacts” from SeaTac airport operations: [hot link to <http://www.desmoineswa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3246>].

The Des Moines citizen group Quiet Skies Puget Sound issued a statement expressing gratitude for the City’s progress, but also disappointment that the City has yet to address key issues:

“We applaud the City’s statement. We have been urging the City Council to publicly address the new health and safety issues arising from SeaTac airport operations, including increased flights and new flight paths, since November of last year. We recommended that the City support Representative Tina Orwall’s ultra-fine particle emission bill in January, and we are pleased they have now done so.

However, the City’s statement is silent on other key issues, including new flight paths and new noise over parts of the City not previously the subjected to aircraft overflights. Does the City have a position on the increased flights and new flight paths and new noise? Does the City intend to oppose increased flights and new flight paths if they cause harm to human health and the environment? Further, the City has failed to publicly discuss, let alone express its support for, pending national legislation – including the Quiet Communities Act – addressing NextGen flight path and noise problems, even though the Council was provided a draft motion in November for consideration. This legislation is supported by our Congressman Adam Smith through his membership in the Congressional Quiet Skies Caucus and co-sponsorship of the Act. We fail to see any reason Des Moines is not speaking up on the record in support.

Notably, other Airport neighboring cities have been proactive. Burien has sued the FAA over this issue; Federal Way has formed a task force; and the City of SeaTac appealed the Port of Seattle’s Final State Environmental Policy Act Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance relating to the flight corridor program. All of these actions are in addition to supporting the ultra-fine particles bill, and all of these actions relate in some way to opposing the new flight paths and their associated new noise and health concerns.

Last week’s City Council meeting comments, and yesterday’s posting, are the first public comments from our City since we began bringing the issues to the City’s attention in November of 2016. While we agree with the City that increased flights in the long-standing north/south flight paths (“narrowing bandwidth”) should be opposed or adequately mitigated, the City inexplicably fails to address aircraft flying new routes outside historical flight paths. If the City did in fact receive information from the FAA or others about the “impacts from the NextGen program,” we hope the City will exercise maximum transparency and publicly share what it learned, certainly no later than the next City Council meeting – there is no legal or practical

reason to delay informing residents about what the City now knows that the FAA or the Port are proposing – at a minimum so that the residents of Des Moines can take action if the City Council will not. We hope the City will consider this progress as a first step, always choose transparency with its citizens, accept our ongoing offers of support and collaboration, and take action on these critical issues at its earliest opportunity.”

Quiet Skies Puget Sound <https://www.facebook.com/groups/QuietSkiesPugetSound/> is the 29<sup>th</sup> chapter of the National Quiet Skies Coalition <https://nqsc.org/>. The Des Moines group works with citizen groups all over the Puget Sound region, including the Burien Quiet Skies Coalition.

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