



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 184

DATE: January 30, 2020

SPONSOR: Senator Lam, et al.

ASSIGNED TO: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (sara.morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

University of Maryland, Baltimore – Study on the Health Effects of Air Traffic Noise

Senate Bill 184 would require the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) to study the health impacts of aircraft overflight noise on communities living beneath flightpaths from the Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI) Airport since the introduction of the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). Residents in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties are also subjected to severe aircraft overflight noise pollution from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) and are encouraged that the BWI specific study required under SB 184 could produce principles that could be universally applied to NextGen procedures being used at DCA.

To that end, Montgomery County supports this legislation but respectfully requests amendments to the bill directing UMB to share its report with Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

Developed to modernize and improve the efficiency of the nation's airspace system, NextGen satellite-based procedures have led the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to adopt new flight patterns around "metroplex" airports (including BWI and DCA) that have drastically concentrated flights over residential areas, historic properties, parks and recreational areas in Montgomery County. In a December 31, 2019 letter to FAA's Regional Administrator for the Eastern Region, Maryland's Attorney General called on the FAA to adhere to federal rules governing a thorough environmental study and public review of proposed changes to flight procedures at DCA. As this unfolds, we believe that the UMB study of health impact at BWI could help the State to advance a resolution benefitting both BWI-impacted and DCA-impacted Maryland residents.

Again, Montgomery County supports SB 184 with the proposed amendments and urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report.