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RICK LARSEN
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Congress of the United States
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May 5, 2020

The Honorable James E. McPherson
Acting Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350-1000

Dear Acting Secretary McPherson:

On March 19, 2020, the Navy submitted its report to Congress on the Real Time Aircraft Noise Monitoring Plan required by the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 National Defense Authorization Act. This plan outlined next steps for real-time noise monitoring at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey Island and NAS Lemoore.

I am pleased the Navy selected NAS Whidbey Island as one of the two installations for noise monitoring. NAS Whidbey Island is a vital installation for military readiness. However, I have heard concerns about the design of the study from local elected officials and community stakeholders that I urge the Navy to address before commencing noise monitoring.

For example, the plan indicates sound level monitors (SLMs) will primarily be placed adjacent to approach and departure points. I request researchers place SLMs at additional points throughout a variety of modeled noise contours in order to better capture the local soundscape. I have also heard concerns the four-week duration of the study may be insufficient, given the variable nature of airfield usage, particularly at Outlying Field Coupeville. I also request the Navy to address these concerns about the design of the study.

I continue to support the Navy conducting a public meeting to ensure the concerns of all impacted communities and stakeholders, many of which have been involved in this matter for many years, are taken into consideration. I implore the Navy to expand public outreach in order to answer any additional community member questions.

I look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress
Washington State, 2nd District