

**REPORT OF THE  
CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST**

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DATE: March 31, 2011

TO: Honorable Members of the Information Technology and Governmental Affairs Committee

FROM: Gerry F. Miller   
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No. 11-0002-S28  
Assignment No. 11-03-0286

SUBJECT: Resolution (Rosendahl-Hahn-Koretz) to SUPPORT Legislation or Administrative Action to Alter the Departure Path and to Remove the Flight Schools at Santa Monica Airport for Health and Safety Purposes

CLA RECOMMENDATION: ADOPT Resolution (Rosendahl-Hahn-Koretz) to include in the City's 2011-2012 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT for legislation or administrative action that would (1) alter the departure path at Santa Monica Airport (SMO) to enhance safety and reduce air pollution, and (2) close the flight schools at SMO.

SUMMARY:

Resolution (Rosendahl-Hahn-Koretz), introduced on March 9, 2011, notes that the current flight paths utilized at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Santa Monica Airport (SMO) intersect offshore, causing jets at SMO to idle on the runways while waiting for clearance by LAX air traffic controllers. While idling on the runways, these jet aircraft spew high concentrations of air emissions into neighboring West Los Angeles communities, such as Mar Vista and Palms.

The Resolution reports that separate studies by UCLA, SCAQMD and LAUSD have found evidence of very high levels of ultra-fine particles, black carbon and other potentially harmful health impacts that they linked to Santa Monica Airport.

Also, six flight training schools at SMO expose the densely populated local neighborhoods to potential safety hazards of pilot errors or inexperience in aircraft overhead.

The Resolution proposes that the City's 2011- 2012 Federal Legislative Program include SUPPORT for legislation or administrative action that would alter the departure flight path at Santa Monic Airport in order to enhance safety and reduce air pollution caused by jets idling on the runways, as well as to bring about the closing of flight schools at SMO.


BACKGROUND:

The City of Los Angeles historically has adopted legislative positions consistent with that now being proposed by Resolution (Rosendahl-Hahn-Koretz). Air emissions, noise pollution, and the safety of flight operations originating from Santa Monica Airport have long been concerns of the residents of adjacent neighborhoods that are located within the City of Los Angeles.

DEPARTMENT(S) NOTIFIED: Airports, Fire, Police

BILL STATUS:

None yet identified.

  
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Christine Yee Hollis  
Analyst

Attachments: Resolution (Rosendahl-Hahn-Koretz), introduced March 9, 2011

11-0002-528

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RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the current flight paths of Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Santa Monica Airport (SMO) intersect off shore, causing jets at SMO to be held and delayed on the runway while they wait to be cleared by LAX air traffic controllers; and these idling jets held on Santa Monica's runways spew high concentrations of jet emissions into the neighboring communities, including West L.A., Mar Vista and Venice; and

WHEREAS, a recent study by the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) measured 1,000 times normal levels of ultra-fine particles and 250 times normal levels of black carbon within the Los Angeles residential neighborhood directly downwind of Santa Monica Airport, pollutants generated by idling jets and jet blasts at the airport; and these findings correlate with a recent study by the South Coast Air Quality Management District as well as with findings of a 1999 health risk assessment conducted by the Los Angeles Unified School District; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, a team of UCLA resident pediatricians published a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) pointing to numerous potential harmful health impacts from Santa Monica Airport; and

WHEREAS, once in the air, SMO jets can come within a few miles of commercial airliners departing LAX, causing potential safety concerns for the traveling public; and

WHEREAS, Santa Monica Airport hosts six flight training schools at which pilots, and pilots-in-training, perform numerous practice maneuvers over the densely populated Los Angeles neighborhoods of Venice, Mar Vista, and areas of West Los Angeles, increasing safety concerns; and

WHEREAS, a flight school airplane crashed last year at Penmar Golf Course in Venice, killing the pilot and raising grave concerns for the safety of local residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2011-2012 Federal Legislative Program SUPPORT for legislation or administrative action that would alter the departure path at Santa Monica Airport (SMO) to enhance safety and reduce air pollution that results from jets idling on the runway as well as closing the flight schools at SMO.

Presented by *Bill Rosendahl*  
BILL ROSENDAHL  
Councilmember, 11th District

*Janice Hahn*  
JANICE HAHN  
Councilwoman, 15th District

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Seconded by *Paul Kretz*

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