



Mayor

Kevin Muldoon

Mayor Pro Tem

Noah Blom

Council Members

Brad Avery

Joy Brenner

Diane Brooks Dixon

Marshall "Duffy" Duffield

Will O'Neill

July 14, 2022

Chair Doug Chaffee and Members of the Board of Supervisors
Orange County Board of Supervisors
333 W. Santa Ana Blvd.
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Re: John Wayne Airport (JWA)

Chair Chaffee and Members of the Board:

In recent months, members of the Board of Supervisors have publicly commented on the idea of lengthening John Wayne Airport's commercial runway (2L/20R) to accommodate larger, wide-body aircraft. This concept is not new and the County of Orange has historically dismissed it as a viable noise mitigation measure. However, due to the growing concern in our community that the Board may move forward with a study on this proposal, we feel it necessary to reiterate that Newport Beach remains staunchly opposed to any proposal related to or study of increasing the length of the existing commercial runway in any manner. Further, we wish to reiterate that one of the seven principles of the Corridor Cities Coalition, comprised of Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Orange, Newport Beach, Santa Ana, Tustin, Laguna Beach, Irvine, Villa Park and Laguna Woods, is to "oppose a second air carrier runway or an extension of the existing runway."

Newport Beach has invested a significant amount of time and resources into studying quieter departures and fully understands that the weight of an aircraft is a key factor in the amount of noise it emits. We believe that larger, heavier aircraft, laden with fuel and passengers, will not necessarily be quieter when compared to the existing aircraft types operating at JWA, even with the latest generation aircraft engine technology. The County's consultants have previously concurred with this opinion.

The Noise Technical Report that was part of the County's EIR 617 in 2014 states, "Runway extensions can also be used as a noise abatement measure to help reduce the need for using reverse thrust upon landing, which can generate a considerable amount of ground-level noise to areas in close proximity to the airport. JWA has very limited real estate to consider a runway extension; therefore, any potential extension would be small. A movement of the runway threshold to the north could reduce

noise to the south of the airport, except for any increase in departure weight that would be accommodated by the extended runway. There would be a concomitant increase in noise to the north unless a displaced threshold kept the landing point at its current position. If the runway were lengthened to the south the only change in noise to the south would be an increase associated with any increase in aircraft weight permitted by the extension.”

The County made a similar statement, acknowledging larger aircraft will likely weigh more, in its response to the 2013-2014 Grand Jury report titled “Maximizing the Benefits of John Wayne Airport to Better Serve Orange County.” The County’s response (still available on the Grand Jury website) stated, in part, “[t]he construction of a displaced threshold at John Wayne Airport could provide for improved departure performance of aircraft at JWA, which could include an increase in departure weight.”

The City has also heard comments by County officials that a 500-foot extension would allow larger, newer aircraft engine technology to fly out of JWA and the aircraft will be able to get higher, faster, resulting in less noise over the departure corridor. We question this assumption since larger aircraft, even with the newer engine technology, will be heavier and therefore not necessarily quieter or capable of getting higher, faster during departure. There’s also no assurance a carrier would assign its newest engine technology aircraft to JWA.

Similarly, we have heard there’s an assumption that a runway extension would allow planes to be higher when they cross back over South Orange County. This too is questionable as the departure procedures for Runway 20R limit altitudes at offshore waypoints to at or below 5,000 feet.

We ask the Board to publicly assure the communities in the arrival and departure corridors that the County is holding true to past practice and will not pursue any lengthening of the commercial runway at JWA. Should the County change course and choose to move forward with even a study, we ask that direction to move forward occur only after consideration by the Board of Supervisors, at a publicly noticed meeting. Historically, the Board has been transparent and forthright in its proposals and plans for JWA and we ask that open dialogue with the communities that bear the impacts of arrivals and departures continue in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,



Kevin Muldoon
Mayor

Cc: Newport Beach City Council