



## KATRINA FOLEY

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Mayor Kevin Muldoon  
City of Newport Beach  
100 Civic Center Drive.  
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Re: Opposition to Runway Expansion at John Wayne Airport

Dear Mayor Muldoon and City Council:

Thank you for your detailed letter sharing the City of Newport Beach's concerns about potential runway expansion. I appreciate your city's time and thoughtfulness regarding these policy issues at the airport that significantly impact our community. As both the Supervisor whose district includes the airport, and as a member of the Board of Supervisors Ad-Hoc committee, I oppose any effort to expand the runway.

I read comments and watched the meeting where my colleagues raised this issue, but their personal comments do not reflect any formal studies, discussions, board, or airport commissioner actions. My office remains strong in support for a quieter, greener, cleaner airport and opposition to any expansion of the runway. I want to assure you my office will notify, engage, and partner with the cities of Newport Beach and Costa Mesa if ever the chatter actually transforms into any formal directives to airport staff. Our Airport Commissioner is a Newport Beach resident living under the flight zone who keeps my office informed about airport impact concerns. I want you to know my position opposing runway expansion is reiterated by my staff and Commissioner, and well understood by the airport and county leadership team.

As County Supervisor, I'm committed to ensuring that John Wayne Airport is a good neighbor and its impacts on the surrounding community are minimized. In assessing impacts and making decisions regarding the airport, it's critical that we as policymakers are guided by facts and evidence. Based on the overwhelming facts and evidence of increased impact to Newport Beach and Costa Mesa residents, schools, and businesses, I will continue to strongly oppose any policy proposal to expand the runway.

Despite no specific proposal, I want to make my position clear on the merits of this potential policy proposal. I also want to address some unpersuasive arguments stated recently by my colleagues who favor expansion. Your letter covers my similar position well—but I'm unconvinced and disagree with those who claim runway expansion will reduce noise. Rather, the current facts and evidence lead me to the conclusion that runway expansion will lead to more noise. Though your letter articulated the many reasons why runway expansion should be rejected, I want to focus on two key assertions: 1. Expansion of the runway equals larger quieter

cleaner airplanes; and 2. Larger airplanes accommodate more passengers on fewer flights. Both assertions rely on false assumptions.

First, there is no assurance that extending the runway expansion will bring in newer, quieter aircraft to John Wayne Airport FAA regulations and federal law prohibit the County from forcing airlines to use only aircrafts with newer, quieter technology. In the absence of any local regulatory power, there is no guarantee that only larger, newer, and quieter aircrafts utilize the runway. All of us support newer, quieter aircraft and we should continue our efforts to encourage its adoption, but we should not pretend that runway expansion will automatically lead to outcomes inconsistent with federal law. Runway expansion will certainly ensure larger aircraft can depart out of the airport, but there is no guarantee the aircraft will be newer nor quieter.

Second, although runway expansion will allow larger planes to carry more passengers and possibly reduce commercial flights, it will also allow expanded service for General Aviation, thereby increasing flights and noise every day, 24 hours a day. I've read and heard the assertion that expansion would allow airlines to use larger aircraft which accommodate more passengers, leading to less flights and noise. This assertion is difficult to comprehend in the context of relevant facts and laws. While the 1985 Settlement Agreement caps the number of passengers on a yearly basis, this landmark agreement excludes General Aviation (GA). As you know, GA operators are not restricted by any passenger cap or curfew—once again federal law restricts the County's power to regulate in this area without formal study and FAA approval.

I believe that the real threat—or nightmare scenario-- of runway expansion at the airport lies with the General Aviation sector. Expansion of the runway risks the potential that larger and louder GA aircraft arrive and depart from John Wayne Airport more often. Unrestricted by the curfew in the 1985 Settlement Agreement, these aircraft could continue to fly 24 hours a day, seven days a week, unregulated except by traffic control. Such expansion threatens the quality of life to our community.

My office currently leads a Fly Friendly initiative I started last year that includes study of existing departures, FAA requirements and allowances related to local requirements and programs, and an analysis of ways to employ new technology to reduce noise and pollution. Our Fly Friendly initiative launches next month and aims to address the current General Aviation noise and pollution issues through both education and incentives to voluntarily fly the current quietest departure.

The stakes are high, and I appreciate your city's vigilance on this very important issue. Thankfully, I am not aware of any serious or formal efforts under discussion to expand the runway— just chatter. My position is clear and well known to our new Airport Director Charlene Reynolds. As your city and ad hoc committee representative, I will alert you immediately and provide full transparency on any change directed to airport staff by any Board member or the Board majority.

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Thank you again for your thoughtful letter on behalf of the residents of Newport Beach. As County Supervisor, I remain committed to the law and spirit of the 1985 Settlement Agreement which sought to provide balance between demand for air travel and the adverse effects on the surrounding community. I look forward to continued partnership to achieve this balance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly or to reach out to our team member assigned to the airport, Alex Rounaghi at (714) 834-3220 to discuss this issue or any other airport related matters further.

Respectfully,



Katrina Foley

Orange County Supervisor, Second District

Cc:

Charlene Reynolds, John Wayne Airport Director