

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4308

To reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the
Environmental Protection Agency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 28, 1996

Mrs. LOWEY (for herself, Mr. SKAGGS, Mr. FROST, Mr. YATES, Mrs. MORELLA, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. NADLER, Mr. MANTON, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. PALLONE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control
in the Environmental Protection Agency.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Quiet Communities
5 Act of 1996”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds that:

1 (1) For too many Americans, noise from air-
2 craft, vehicular traffic, and a variety of other
3 sources is a constant source of torment. In fact,
4 nearly 20,000,000 Americans are exposed to noise
5 levels that can lead to psychological and physio-
6 logical damage, and another 40,000,000 people are
7 exposed to noise levels that cause sleep or work dis-
8 ruption.

9 (2) Chronic exposure to noise has been linked
10 to increased risk of cardiovascular problems, strokes,
11 and nervous disorders. Excessive noise also causes
12 sleep deprivation and task interruptions, both of
13 which pose untold costs on society in diminished
14 worker productivity.

15 (3) Pursuant to authorities granted under the
16 Clean Air Act of 1970, the Noise Control Act of
17 1972, and the Quiet Communities Act of 1978, the
18 Environmental Protection Agency established an Of-
19 fice of Noise Abatement and Control. Its responsibil-
20 ities included promulgating noise emission stand-
21 ards, requiring product labeling, facilitating the de-
22 velopment of low emission products, coordinating
23 Federal noise reduction programs, assisting State
24 and local abatement efforts, and promoting noise
25 education and research. However, funding for the

1 Office of Noise Abatement and Control was termi-
2 nated in 1982 and no funds have been provided
3 since.

4 (4) Because the Environmental Protection
5 Agency remains legally responsible for enforcing reg-
6 ulations issued under the Noise Control Act of 1972
7 even though funding for these activities were termi-
8 nated, and because the Noise Control Act of 1972
9 prohibits State and local governments from regulat-
10 ing noise sources in many situations, noise abate-
11 ment programs across the country lie dormant.

12 (5) As population growth and air and vehicular
13 traffic continue to increase, noise pollution is likely
14 to become an even greater problem in the future.
15 The health and welfare of our citizens demands that
16 the Environmental Protection Agency, the lead Fed-
17 eral agency for the protection of public health and
18 welfare, once again assume a role in combating noise
19 pollution.

20 **SEC. 3. REESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF NOISE ABATE-**
21 **MENT AND CONTROL.**

22 (a) REESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the
23 Environmental Protection Agency shall reestablish within
24 the Environmental Protection Agency an Office of Noise
25 Abatement and Control. This office shall be responsible

1 for coordinating Federal noise abatement activities, updat-
2 ing or developing new noise standards, providing technical
3 assistance to local communities, and promoting research
4 and education on the impacts of noise pollution. In meet-
5 ing these responsibilities, the Environmental Protection
6 Agency shall emphasize abatement approaches that rely
7 on local and State activity, market incentives, and coordi-
8 nation with other public and private agencies.

9 (b) STUDY.—Within the funds made available for the
10 Office of Noise Abatement and Control, the Administrator
11 shall conduct a study of airport noise and its physiological
12 effects on surrounding communities in major metropolitan
13 areas. Such study shall include recommendations to the
14 Federal Aviation Administration on new measures that
15 can be implemented to mitigate the impact of aircraft
16 noise on metropolitan areas and surrounding communities.

17 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

18 There are authorized to be appropriated \$5,000,000
19 for each of fiscal years 1997, 1998, and 1999, and
20 \$8,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2000 and 2001.

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