

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1643

To amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit certain helicopter flights over major cities with high population densities, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 8, 2021

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York (for herself, Mr. NADLER, and Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to prohibit certain helicopter flights over major cities with high population densities, and for other purposes.

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 “Improving Helicopter
5 Safety Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN FLIGHTS OVER MAJOR**
2 **CITIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 447 of title 49, United
4 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
5 lowing:

6 **“§ 44741. Prohibition on certain flights over major**
7 **cities**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the
9 date of enactment of this section, no person may operate
10 a civil rotorcraft in covered airspace except as provided
11 for under subsection (b).

12 “(b) EXCEPTIONS.—

13 “(1) PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.—The pro-
14 hibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to a flight
15 carried out for purposes of public health and safety,
16 including—

17 “(A) law enforcement;

18 “(B) emergency response;

19 “(C) disaster response;

20 “(D) the provision of medical services; and

21 “(E) providing other services for the ben-
22 efit of the general public, including flights car-
23 ried out for research or for official purposes by
24 a news organization.

25 “(2) INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE.—The
26 prohibition in subsection (a) shall not apply to a

1 flight carried out for purposes heavy-lift operations
2 in support of construction and infrastructure main-
3 tenance.

4 “(c) COVERED AIRSPACE DEFINED.—In this section,
5 the term ‘covered airspace’ means the airspace directly
6 over any city with a population over 8 million people and
7 with a population density of over 25,000 people per square
8 mile, including the airspace over any waterways considered
9 within the limits of such city.”.

10 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sec-
11 tions for chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code, is
12 amended by adding at the end the following:

“44741. Prohibition on certain flights over major cities.”.

13 **SEC. 3. HELICOPTER FLIGHT ROUTES FOR MAJOR CITIES**
14 **AND SURROUNDING AREAS.**

15 Not later than 90 days after a city initially meets the
16 requirements to be covered by the prohibition in section
17 44741 of title 49, United States Code (as added by section
18 2), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administra-
19 tion shall issue or update such regulations as are nec-
20 essary to carry out the requirements of such section.

21 **SEC. 4. TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.**

22 (a) SECTION 44737.—Chapter 447 of title 49, United
23 States Code, is amending by redesignating the second sec-
24 tion 44737 (as added by section 581 of the FAA Reau-
25 thorization Act of 2018) as section 44740.

1 (b) ANALYSIS.—The analysis for chapter 447 of title
2 49, United States Code, is amended—

3 (1) by striking the item relating to the second
4 section 44737 (as added by section 581 of the FAA
5 Reauthorization Act of 2018); and

6 (2) by inserting after the item relating to sec-
7 tion 44739 the following new item:

“44740. Special rule for certain aircraft operations.”.

8 (c) SPECIAL RULE FOR CERTAIN AIRCRAFT OPER-
9 ATIONS.—Section 44740 of title 49, United States Code,
10 (as redesignated by subsection (a)) is amended—

11 (1) in the heading, by striking the period at the
12 end;

13 (2) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “(1)” the
14 second time it appears; and

15 (3) in subsection (c)(2), by adding a period at
16 the end.

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