



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 226-A

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.6311 and S.7381, which would prohibit certain non-essential flight operations at municipal heliports and Hudson River Park.

By Council Members Brewer, Holden, Avilés, Rivera, Hudson, Louis, Cabán, Restler, Farías, Gutiérrez and Hanks

Whereas, New York City is one of the most densely populated cities in the world; and

Whereas, The City currently operates two municipal heliports; the Downtown Skyport - formally the Downtown Manhattan Heliport - and the East 34<sup>th</sup> Street Heliport; and

Whereas, Additionally, there is the West 30<sup>th</sup> Street heliport located in Hudson River Park that is governed by New York State; and

Whereas, There are thousands of commercial helicopter flights over the City each month; and

Whereas, Over the past 20 years there have been numerous notable accidents over the City's airspace, raising congestion and safety issues; and

Whereas, The most recent fatal accident occurred on April 10, 2025, involving a helicopter operated by New York Helicopter Charter Inc. that departed from the Downtown Manhattan Heliport and experienced a major mechanical failure, crashing into the Hudson River and killing all six people on board; and

Whereas, Subsequently, during the investigation into the accident, the FAA issued an “emergency order of suspension” on April 14<sup>th</sup>, suspending New York Helicopter Charter Inc.’s operations, and the company closed; and

Whereas, In May of 2019, a charter helicopter crashed into the Hudson River while the pilot, who suffered a hand injury, was moving the aircraft from the fueling area to the customer section of the Hudson

River Park's West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Heliport; and

Whereas, These accidents are reminders of the dangers associated with helicopters in an urban setting; and

Whereas, In 1998, the New York State legislature passed and then-Governor Pataki signed the Hudson River Park Act ("HRPA"), which formally designated parkland along the City's westside; and

Whereas, Hudson River Park is a 550-acre riverfront park and estuarine sanctuary spanning four miles along the west side of Manhattan, from the northern boundary of Battery Park City in Tribeca to W 59 St. in Hell's Kitchen; and

Whereas, Hudson River Park attracts over 17 million visits annually and offers numerous athletic and recreational activities including baseball, basketball, running, cycling and kayaking; and

Whereas, In addition to the creation of Hudson River Park, HRPA established a New York State public benefit corporation called the Hudson River Park Trust to continue the planning, construction, management and operation of the park; and

Whereas, Among Hudson River Park's management responsibilities is the operation of the frequently trafficked West 30<sup>th</sup> Street heliport; and

Whereas, Helicopter-related noise complaints to New York City's 3-1-1 increased from approximately 26,000 in 2022 to approximately 59,000 in 2023 with a vast majority of the complaints coming from Manhattan; and

Whereas, New York City residents are exposed to noise and pollutants from over a thousand monthly helicopter flights; and

Whereas, According to the Natural Resources Defense Council's study "Needless Noise: The Negative Impacts of Helicopters Traffic in New York City and the Tri-State Region," exposure to frequent overhead flights are associated with a number of health effects in children, including high blood pressure, neuroendocrinological issues, impaired psychological and cognitive functions, learned helplessness, poorer

long-term memory and diminished reading comprehension; and

Whereas, Helicopters emit air pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen oxide and formaldehyde, which are known to cause asthma, cancer and other illnesses; and

Whereas, Parks and heliports, especially one that is heavily trafficked as the West 30<sup>th</sup> Street heliport, are not meant for co-location; and

Whereas, In an effort to make New York City's skies safer, New York State Assemblymember Tony Simone and New York State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal introduced A.6311 and S.7381, respectively, which seek to prohibit certain non-essential flight operations at municipal heliports and Hudson River Park; and

Whereas, A.6311/S.7381 would amend the New York State General Municipal Law by adding restrictions for certain helicopter flight operations including: sightseeing tours over New York City; and flights conducting photography, videography or similar production activities that are non-news related; and

Whereas, A.6311/S.7381 would amend the HRP A and prohibit all nonessential flights from the West 30<sup>th</sup> Street Heliport; now, therefore be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, A.6311 and S.7381, which would prohibit certain non-essential flight operations at municipal heliports and Hudson River Park.

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