



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Office of the Administrator

800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

October 23, 2018

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

Thank you for your July 30 letter, cosigned by your congressional colleagues, encouraging the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to continue to engage with the DC Metroplex Baltimore-Washington International Community Roundtable (BWI Community Roundtable) and the DCA Reagan National Airport Community Working Group (DCA Working Group). The FAA is committed to remaining engaged with the BWI Community Roundtable and DCA Working Group to continue making progress for the communities involved.

The State of Maryland has filed a petition for review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit Court alleging that the FAA violated the National Environmental Policy Act when it implemented approach procedures at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) in 2015. Maryland also submitted an administrative petition to the FAA regarding flight procedures at Baltimore-Washington Thurgood Marshall International Airport (BWI). Subsequently, Howard County, Maryland, also filed a 169-page administrative petition regarding flight procedures at BWI. Because Maryland's petitions relate to flight procedures at BWI and DCA, we have had to carefully consider our approach to continued engagement with the BWI Community Roundtable and the DCA Working Group.

While we will need to refrain from public comment on matters that are at issue in the lawsuit filed by Maryland, we have indicated to the State of Maryland and Howard County that if they will withdraw their administrative petitions, we will work with them going forward on the issues that are of concern to them. As the FAA considers recommendations from both organizations, we have always been clear that any changes would be a new action subject to safety and environmental reviews.

We have sent an identical letter to each of the cosigners of your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DK Elwell". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator