



UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

August 19, 2019

The Honorable Matthew P. Donovan
Acting Secretary
United States Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1670

Dear Acting Secretary Donovan:

I write to relay concerns expressed to me by my constituents after their review of the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the F-35A operational beddown in Madison, Wisconsin, and to seek answers to new questions about the proposal after hearing their concerns.

According to the draft EIS, there will be 1,019 newly impacted households (2,215 people) who will experience aircraft noise levels above 65 decibels (dB) Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL). The report also states those areas exposed to noise levels above 65 dB DNL are now “potentially incompatible for residential land use.” (WI-32, WI-73). Additionally, the EIS states: “There would be significant disproportionate impacts to low-income and minority populations as well as children...the Proposed Action could disproportionately impact children.” (2-32; 2-33) My constituents are very concerned by these new findings, I would appreciate written responses to the following questions:

- How does the U.S. Air Force (USAF) define “incompatible for residential land use?”
- In layman’s terms, what does this mean for families currently living in this area?
- What recourse is available to those who currently live in the area defined as “potentially incompatible for residential land use?”
- Are there strategies the USAF can use to reduce the area of residential land included in the 65-75 dB DNL range?
- What noise mitigation strategies are available to the affected locations?
- What support, including any noise mitigation efforts, will the USAF offer impacted families and communities in Madison?

With respect to concerns about a possible increase in the number of military flights conducted above the Madison community, the draft EIS states that there will be 600 additional annual sorties conducted by new F-35A aircraft compared to the existing F-16 aircraft. In past training situations, the USAF has used flight simulators to reduce the total number of training flights over a community. Please answer the following questions regarding flight simulations and annual sorties:

- Will flight simulators for the new F-35A planes be made available at Truax Field?
- Will such simulators reduce the number of annual sorties proposed in the draft EIS?
- What can we actually expect with respect to the number of flights that depart and land in Madison compared to the numbers we currently experience?

In summary, estimates that more than 2,000 individuals will be significantly impacted by noise and an additional 600 flights will occur over the Madison community are concerning. The draft EIS does not propose strategies to affirmatively mitigate the noise or reduce number of training flights that will affect our community. I thank you for examining this matter further, and I look forward to working with you to address these questions on behalf of the residents of Wisconsin's 2nd Congressional District.

Sincerely,



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress