

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 951

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

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 24, 1997

Mr. TORRICELLI (for himself and Mr. SARBANES) introduced the following
bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment
and Public Works

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 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1)(A) for too many citizens of the United
9 States, noise from aircraft, vehicular traffic, and a

1 variety of other sources is a constant source of tor-
2 ment; and

3 (B) nearly 20,000,000 citizens of the United
4 States are exposed to noise levels that can lead to
5 psychological and physiological damage, and another
6 40,000,000 people are exposed to noise levels that
7 cause sleep or work disruption;

8 (2)(A) chronic exposure to noise has been
9 linked to increased risk of cardiovascular problems,
10 strokes, and nervous disorders; and

11 (B) excessive noise causes sleep deprivation and
12 task interruptions, which pose untold costs on soci-
13 ety in diminished worker productivity;

14 (3)(A) to carry out the Clean Air Act of 1970
15 (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.), the Noise Control Act of
16 1972 (42 U.S.C. 4901 et seq.), and the Quiet Com-
17 munities Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–609; 92 Stat.
18 3079), the Administrator of the Environmental Pro-
19 tection Agency established an Office of Noise Abate-
20 ment and Control;

21 (B) the responsibilities of the Office of Noise
22 Abatement and Control included promulgating noise
23 emission standards, requiring product labeling, fa-
24 cilitating the development of low emission products,
25 coordinating Federal noise reduction programs, as-

sisting State and local abatement efforts, and promoting noise education and research; and

(C) funding for the Office of Noise Abatement and Control was terminated in 1982 and no funds have been provided since;

(4) because the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency remains responsible for enforcing regulations issued under the Noise Control Act of 1972 (42 U.S.C. 4901 et seq.) even though funding for the Office of Noise Abatement and Control has been terminated, and because that Act prohibits State and local governments from regulating noise sources in many situations, noise abatement programs across the United States lie dormant;

(5) as the population grows and air and vehicle traffic continues to increase, noise pollution is likely to become an even greater problem in the future; and

(6) the health and welfare of the citizens of the United States demands that the Environmental Protection Agency once again assume a role in combating noise pollution.

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

(a) REESTABLISHMENT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
 2 Environmental Protection Agency shall reestablish
 3 an Office of Noise Abatement and Control (referred
 4 to in this Act as the “Office”).

5 (2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Office shall be re-
 6 sponsible for—

7 (A) coordinating Federal noise abatement
 8 activities;

9 (B) updating or developing noise stand-
 10 ards;

11 (C) providing technical assistance to local
 12 communities; and

13 (D) promoting research and education on
 14 the impacts of noise pollution.

15 (3) EMPHASIZED APPROACHES.—The Office
 16 shall emphasize noise abatement approaches that
 17 rely on State and local activity, market incentives,
 18 and coordination with other public and private agen-
 19 cies.

20 (b) STUDY.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
 22 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
 23 trator of the Environmental Protection Agency shall
 24 submit a study on airport noise to Congress and the
 25 Federal Aviation Administration.

1 (2) AREAS OF STUDY.—The study shall—

2 (A) examine the Federal Aviation Adminis-
3 tration's selection of noise measurement meth-
4 odologies;

5 (B) the threshold of noise at which health
6 impacts are felt; and

7 (C) the effectiveness of noise abatement
8 programs at airports around the United States.

9 (3) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The study shall in-
10 clude specific recommendations to the Federal Avia-
11 tion Administration on new measures that should be
12 implemented to mitigate the impact of aircraft noise
13 on surrounding communities.

14 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

15 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
16 this Act—

17 (1) \$5,000,000 for each of fiscal years 1998,
18 1999, and 2000; and

19 (2) \$8,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2001
20 and 2002.

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