



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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***CM CHIN, MENCHACA &
ROSENTHAL URGE FOR
INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY
FROM TOURIST HELICOPTER
INDUSTRY***

***Electeds renew legislative push to rein in dangerous
and disruptive tour flights***

***In wake of fatal helicopter crash comes forth
revitalized dialogue on the negative impacts of
industry***

A consensus is emerging: 'It isn't worth it'

CITY HALL – Yesterday, Council Members Margaret S. Chin, Carlos Menchaca and Helen Rosenthal questioned City officials on what measures are being taken to address helicopter safety and provide relief for the thousands of New Yorkers bombarded by excessive helicopter noise and air pollution every day.

This week, EDC announced an official ban on open-door tour helicopter flights. While the decision to formalize a ban on these dangerous flights is seen as a positive step, more work needs to be done to ensure passengers' safety, as well as address the negative impacts of the noise and air pollution caused by these helicopters.



“Yesterday’s hearing affirmed the intolerable reality that New Yorkers continue to face at the hands of an industry that has gotten away with evading the rules for too long, and I’m proud to join my colleagues as we fight for these residents’ right to peace and relief,” said **Council Member Chin**. “Despite a deal struck with City to reduce the number of tour flights by 50%, residents in all five boroughs

continue to be beleaguered by excessive noise and fumes from helicopters overhead – with no end in sight. Thank you to Council Members Rosenthal and Menchaca for their leadership, and Chair Vallone for being an unwavering partner in the fight to ensure immediate relief to the residents of Lower Manhattan and across the City.”

“Despite years of continued complaints from my constituents about roaring helicopters overhead, the tourist helicopter industry remains unresponsive to the needs of New Yorkers,” said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**. “The 2016 agreement between the City and industry reduced the overall number of flights, but the industry simply has not addressed the fundamental quality of life, noise, and air pollution issues we are facing. The status quo is unacceptable—and my colleagues and I are committed to changing it and delivering real relief for our residents. Hearings like yesterday’s, along with the legislation introduced last week, represent that commitment. I want to thank Council Members Menchaca and Chin for their continued partnership and want to congratulate Chair Vallone for his leadership elevating the issue.”

“The tourist helicopter industry is a blight on New York City. We must compare any purported economic benefits tourist helicopters generate with the noxious pollution and intolerable noise inflicted on millions of New Yorkers each year,”

said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca**. “Even casual observers can see tourist helicopter flights routinely violate designated flight paths and altitude requirements. Clearly, this is an industry that will not control itself. When our publicly owned land and shared airspace are used for private profit, we have an obligation to impose high standards of responsibility. My City Council Colleagues and I will hold the tourist helicopter industry and the stewards of our public resources accountable.”

This week, Council Members Menchaca, Chin and Rosenthal reintroduced legislation – first introduced in 2015 – that would prohibit tourist helicopters at heliports owned by the city if they do not meet Stage 3 noise levels determined by the Federal Airport Noise and Capacity Act of 1990. Today, helicopters flying from the city’s heliports are mostly Stage 2 helicopters, which operate on higher decibels and produce more fumes.

When asked by Council Members to provide more information on the industry’s overall economic impact, EDC was not forthcoming with statistics about the number of jobs and generated revenue.

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