



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric Adams

Senator Adams Calls on FAA to Re-Evaluate Regulations Governing Low Altitude Urban Airspace

ERIC ADAMS August 10, 2009

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NYS SENATOR ERIC ADAMS CALLS ON THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION TO RE-EVALUATE AND REVISE REGULATIONS GOVERNING LOW ALTITUDE URBAN AIRSPACE

NYS Senator Eric Adams, Chairman of the NYS Senate Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, calls on the FAA, as regulator of the nation's airspace, to propose stronger oversight of the "on-demand" flight industry. Following the tragic mid-air collision over the Hudson River this weekend, Senator Adams urges the FAA to re-evaluate guidelines and recommend changes to urban air traffic rules.

Senator Adams' statement: "Following the heartbreaking mid-air collision that claimed nine lives this weekend, it is clear that we must take a fresh look at the current system of air-traffic regulation in the airspace of busy corridors above our cities.

"Currently, the FAA's jurisdiction begins at 1,100 feet, at which point regulations which govern the commercial airline industry take effect. This boundary requires re-evaluation,

particularly in light of published reports that since 2002, the National Transportation Safety Board has made over a dozen recommendations relating to so-called “on-demand” flights – helicopters and planes with 30 or fewer people – and the FAA has implemented none of them.

“Instead, current practice remains merely pilot observation followed by aircraft maneuver. This “see and avoid” practice is coupled only with loose traffic patterns that require planes traveling south to fly along the New Jersey side of the Hudson River and those proceeding north to use the New York side. This system is clearly insufficient and poses a threat not only to the air passengers but also to people on the ground.

“Of course, the vitality of business and tourism in this heavily-trafficked corridor must be preserved. Quick movement is essential to the success of this industry, and this is an important consideration when evaluating a change of regulation. However, the primary concerns must be ascending safely, cruising securely, and descending unharmed.

“The FAA must re-examine the altitude at which its air traffic management begins in this busy corridor and others like it. Regulation of the “on-demand” flight industry must be analyzed, with safety for all being the highest priority. Determinations that enhance security for those in our skies and on the ground are urgent and essential.”

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