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DISTRICT 4 SUPERVISOR

April 22, 2026

Federal Aviation Administration
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman
800 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Federal Aviation Administration,

As elected representatives for Sonoma County Supervisorial Districts 4 and 5, we are writing on behalf of the residents, businesses, and communities we serve to express our serious and escalating concern regarding the significant aircraft noise impacts associated with the RREHD ONE (RNAV) departure procedure at the Charles M. Schulz – Sonoma County Airport.

This letter reflects a unified request from our constituents, local community leaders, Aviation Commissioners, and private residents across our districts. The level of frustration among the people we represent is substantial and continues to grow. The change in flight operations since implementation of the RREHD ONE procedure in January 2024 has been overwhelming for many neighborhoods. What was once an occasional disturbance has become a persistent and concentrated daily disruption for the residents below the flight paths of the RHED ONE departing aircraft.

The data clearly demonstrates the magnitude and speed of this change.

Annual noise complaints have increased dramatically despite relatively stable flight activity levels:

- **1,135 complaints were recorded in 2023**
- **4,664 complaints were recorded in 2024**
- **29,895 complaints were recorded in 2025**
- **15,530 complaints were recorded in first quarter 2026**

This represents an extraordinary escalation in reported impacts in a very short period of time. The scale of this increase reflects a fundamental change in how aircraft noise is being experienced on the ground. Residents are not simply noticing aircraft more often—they are experiencing repeated, concentrated overflights that are significantly altering daily life in their communities.

Residents consistently report that aircraft are flying in tighter, more concentrated corridors and turning earlier at lower altitudes than under the ~~previous~~ Charlie 8 procedure. Communities that historically experienced occasional aircraft noise are now experiencing frequent and predictable overflights throughout the day. In rural areas with low ambient noise levels, these changes are especially pronounced and disruptive.

The consequences are tangible and widely felt. Residents in our districts have reported:

- Repeated interruption of outdoor activities and conversations
- Sleep disruption and reduced quality of life
- Increased stress and frustration from frequent overhead aircraft noise
- Concerns about long-term impacts on rural character, tourism, and community livability

Local offices are receiving complaints at a scale we have not previously experienced. Community meetings, public comment, and direct outreach from residents reflect a shared and growing sense that the situation has fundamentally changed—and that relief is urgently needed.

We recognize and support the mission of the Federal Aviation Administration to maintain the safety and efficiency of the national airspace system, and we understand that modernization initiatives are necessary. However, modernization must also be responsive when unintended consequences create sustained and disproportionate impacts on communities.

The current level of disruption is not sustainable for the residents we represent.

For this reason, we are respectfully but firmly requesting immediate interim relief.

We ask that the FAA:

- **Temporarily reinstate the Charlie 8 departure procedure**, in full or partial use, to reduce concentrated aircraft noise impacts
- **Provide operational flexibility** for air traffic controllers to utilize the Charlie 8 procedure when conditions allow
- **Engage directly with local leadership and Airport staff** to address community impacts and evaluate operational data
- **Prioritize the development and implementation of a revised, long-term departure procedure** that balances safety, operational efficiency, and community compatibility

Temporary reinstatement of Charlie 8 as a primary departure procedure is a practical and achievable step that can provide meaningful near-term relief while technical work on a permanent solution continues. Taking this action would demonstrate responsiveness to the communities affected and help restore public confidence that their concerns are being heard.

We want to be clear: this request reflects a coordinated and unified effort among public agencies, community leaders, and private citizens throughout our districts. Residents are engaged, informed, and increasingly concerned about the sustained impacts they are experiencing. They are asking for relief, and as their elected representatives, we are obligated to advocate on their behalf.

Our communities have experienced an overwhelming change in aircraft noise exposure in a very short period of time. The scale of this change—and the rapid increase in complaints—demonstrates that the current situation requires timely and meaningful action.

We respectfully request your prompt attention to this matter and your partnership in implementing an interim solution that reduces impacts while long-term improvements are developed.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to the communities we represent.

Sincerely,



Lynda Hopkins
District 5 Supervisor



James Gore
District 4 Supervisor