Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

May 18, 2023

The Honorable Billy Nolen
Federal Aviation Administration Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Administrator Nolen,

I write to you today to share my concerns regarding an incident involving airborne biohazardous waste on May 15th in the Second Congressional District of Minnesota. During my time in Congress, my constituents have alerted me to a variety of concerns regarding the operation, maintenance and impact of airports on the local communities. I believe that this most recent report of flying fecal matter in Burnsville, Minnesota is indicative of a larger issue.

On the morning of May 15th, a constituent from Burnsville, MN reported brown excrement falling onto their car from a significant height.[1] Considering the flight paths in the area, we have reason to suspect that it could have come from an aircraft mid-flight. We know that waste contains potential enteric pathogens and can present risks to the environment and human health if not handled properly. There have been many instances of human waste leaking out of aircraft mid-flight, so it is critical that we do everything possible to implement mitigation strategies and are transparent with those communities directly in-flight paths when malfunctions occur.

My constituents have the right to live their lives without the threat of sewage getting in their coffee. I request your response to the following questions:

1. Has a report been filed with the FAA regarding the May 15th incident?
2. What safety measures are in place to prevent leakage of fecal matter mid-flight?
3. In instances where a plane's septic tank leaks, what has the airline, airport and FAA done to report it to the affected community?
4. What power does FAA hold to decrease the likelihood of these leaks?
5. How many leaks, as of this letter, have occurred within the Metropolitan Airport Commission?
6. Which entity is responsible for the damage and clean-up of septic tank leaks?

Thank you for reviewing this letter, and I look forward to your response on behalf of all Second District residents.

Angie Craig

Angie Craig
Member of Congress

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[1] https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/did-an-airplane-drop-poop-over-a-burnsville-neighborhood/