SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress — September 24, 1998, 12:11 p.m.
2nd Session — **Vote No. 287** — Page S-10877 Temp. Record

FAA REAUTHORIZATION/EPA Noise Abatement Office

SUBJECT: **Wendell Ford National Air Transportation System Improvement Act . . . S. 2279. McCain motion to table the Torricelli amendment No. 3627.**

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 69-27

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 2279, the Wendell Ford National Air Transportation System Improvement Act, will reauthorize most programs of the Federal Aviation Administration for 2 years and will provide funding for aviation safety and security improvements. It will also add slot exemptions at major airports in New York, Chicago, and Washington and will enact limited exemptions to the perimeter rule.

The Torricelli amendment would reestablish the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The office would develop noise standards, and would be specifically charged with reporting on FAA noise abatement standards and with recommending on how to reduce aircraft noise.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. After debate, Senator McCain moved to table the amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

This amendment is based on the false premise that noise pollution from aircraft is getting worse. The truth is that the FAA has done a very good job in reducing aircraft noise levels. Noisy Stage 2 aircraft are being phased out of operation. By the year 2000 the number of people who will still be exposed to loud aircraft will be just 600,000, which will be down from 4.5 million just 8 years ago. Reductions in aircraft noise levels have been ahead of schedule for 6 years in a row now. Additionally, the FAA has further cut the problem in the last few years by spending $2 billion on sound insulation measures and on land purchases around airports in order to further reduce people's exposure to aircraft noise. Finally, research is continuing into making aircraft even quieter, and

(See other side)

YEAS (69)			NAYS (27)		NOT VOTING (4)	
Republicans (50 or 91%)		**Democrats (19 or 46%)**	**Republicans (5 or 9%)**	**Democrats (22 or 54%)**	**Republicans (0)**	**Democrats (4)**
Abraham	Helms	Akaka	D'Amato	Biden		Glenn-[2]
Allard	Hutchinson	Baucus	Domenici	Boxer		Hollings-[2]
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Bingaman	Hutchison	Bumpers		Moseley-Braun-[2]
Bennett	Kempthorne	Breaux	Jeffords	Byrd		Wellstone-[4AN]
Bond	Kyl	Bryan	Specter	Dodd		
Brownback	Lott	Cleland		Durbin		
Burns	Lugar	Conrad		Feinstein		
Campbell	Mack	Daschle		Johnson		
Chafee	McCain	Dorgan		Kennedy		
Coats	McConnell	Feingold		Kerry		
Cochran	Murkowski	Ford		Lautenberg		
Collins	Nickles	Graham		Leahy		
Coverdell	Roberts	Harkin		Levin		
Craig	Roth	Inouye		Lieberman		
DeWine	Santorum	Kerrey		Mikulski		
Enzi	Sessions	Kohl		Moynihan		
Faircloth	Shelby	Landrieu		Murray		
Frist	Smith, Bob	Rockefeller		Reed		
Gorton	Smith, Gordon	Wyden		Reid		
Gramm	Snowe			Robb		
Grams	Stevens			Sarbanes		
Grassley	Thomas			Torricelli		
Gregg	Thompson					
Hagel	Thurmond					
Hatch	Warner					

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:
1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:
AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

Compiled and written by the staff of the Republican Policy Committee—Larry E. Craig, Chairman

it is likely that Stage 4 standards will soon be reached. In short, the FAA has been doing an outstanding job. Given this record, it would be a terrible mistake to risk getting the EPA involved by having it pursue a totally separate effort. If the EPA comes in with new, conflicting standards, recommendations, and bureaucracies it will inevitably cause delays and confusion. Currently, despite our colleagues' intimations to the contrary, the EPA is involved in this issue. It is a member of the Federal Interagency Committee on Aircraft Noise, which is a cooperative effort between the FAA, the EPA, and several other departments and agencies to coordinate Federal efforts to reduce aircraft noise. We prefer the current cooperative, effective process that we already have to the disjointed and confrontational process advocated by the Torricelli amendment. Therefore, we support the motion to table.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Noise is a pollution and it is harmful to people. Little research has been done to date, but the rudimentary studies that have been undertaken show that noise causes hypertension, cardiovascular problems, and gastrointestinal problems. Additionally, an estimated 40 million people with different levels of noise exposure have sleep or work disruption that affects their productivity and their own quality of life. Aircraft are a major cause of this pollution, and every year the problem has been getting worse. According to the FAA, by the year 2007 the number of airplane flights will have increased by 36 percent. The EPA had an office devoted to controlling this pollution, but in 1981 Congress abolished it. Since that time, the only agency that has done anything to reduce aircraft noise is the FAA. We believe that the FAA has done a poor job. It has set 65 decibels as the level that is acceptable for aircraft flying over residential neighborhoods. The Natural Resources Defense Council says that level is far too high and completely inappropriate. It is time we bring the expertise of pollution control experts back to bear on this issue. The Torricelli amendment would reestablish the EPA's Office of Noise Abatement and Control. We urge our colleagues to support this amendment.