

STATEMENT BY FUJIO MATSUDA, DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Honolulu has had a long history of aircraft noise problems dating back to the arrival of the first jet transports in 1959.

Information available to us now indicates that the Concorde Supersonic Transport, which is expected to be operational through Hawaii in 1969, will be somewhat noisier in the vicinity of airports than any aircraft with which we are now familiar. A conceptual master plan for Honolulu International Airport has just been completed and is in the final stages of refinement within our department. The recommendations include a new jet runway and the extension of the existing runway to reduce community noise levels during take-offs, and landings. This effort will be negated, however, if the noise level created by aircraft is permitted to increase appreciably.

We feel that aircraft noise can be effectively controlled by the Secretary of Transportation through rules and regulations and that this must be accomplished at the Federal level to assure acceptable noise levels by not only U.S. manufactured airplanes but also by foreign manufactured aircraft such as the Concorde SST. If prompt Federal control is not exercised over aircraft noise, we must then look forward to increased pressure by local groups for banning flight operations during specified hours of the day or at specified noise levels with the attendant problems to the tourist industry which this pressure will create. There may as well be increased litigation by property owners over alleged damage to their property values by aircraft noise and increased capital requirements for expansion of airports to cope with aircraft noise.

We feel that H.R. 3400 is of great importance to the people of Hawaii in particular and to the general public as a whole. We urge its passage.

Mrs. MINK. The possibility that such supersonic planes will be operational in our airways by 1969 indicates the urgency of a concentrated study by the Federal Government now on the effects that this jet noise will have on both human beings and on physical property, and what can be done to eliminate disturbances that go beyond the tolerance level. The jet aircraft in use today have already posed substantial problems in regard to disturbance of peaceful occupancy of homes located near airports, and litigation to recover damages because of the subsequent devaluation of such property is not uncommon. Since airport facilities are under the jurisdiction of municipalities, counties, and State agencies, lawsuits stemming from the approach and takeoff of the new supersonic craft could easily pose a significant problem.

There is no doubt that Federal action is called for. We may observe, in fact, that NASA, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Bureau of Standards, and the military services have recognized this responsibility by conducting separate research on sound and suppression devices and on the effects of sound on human beings. Secretary of the Interior Udall has underscored the necessity of a Federal approach by his recent formation of a blue-ribbon panel of scientists to investigate all environmental implications of the anticipated supersonic jets. It would appear desirable from the standpoint of efficiency and economic savings to move all of the research under one roof by directing the Secretary of Transportation to coordinate the formulation of standards for the control and abatement of jet noise as provided for in H.R. 3400.

There are several areas of solutions that have been brought forward by researchers to date. One is to reduce the noise at its source by such devices as sound suppressors in engines or by fuselage modification. An alternative is to remove the source of the noise from people by relocating airports or at the very least by changing runway patterns to direct incoming and outgoing flights away from populated areas.