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Democratic candidates seeking Duckworth's seat debate O'Hare



From left, Deborah Bullwinkel, Raja Krishnamoorthi, and Mike Noland are 8th District Congressional candidates for the 2016 election.



Erin Hegarty

Democratic candidates hoping to succeed Rep. Tammy Duckworth in the 8th congressional District butted heads Tuesday night on how they would fix O'Hare International Airport noise and expansion issues.

In a debate on WTTW Channel 11's "Chicago Tonight," the three candidates -- state Sen. Mike Noland, businessman Raja Krishnamoorthi and Villa Park Mayor Deb Bullwinkel -- met for their third public debate before Illinois' March 15 primary election.

Noland says fixing O'Hare noise and expansion issues comes down to a few tasks. First, he says, municipalities like Bloomingdale and Schaumburg need to be areas also considered affected by noise and expansion.

"One of the things my opponent is not mentioning here is the need to open up new gates, which means we

need to open up more competition with the airlines," Noland said.

Krishnamoorthi disagreed.

"Open more gates and bring more airline traffic to the airport? That's not going to reduce the noise," he said.

Krishnamoorthi proposes "trying to reopen some of the diagonal runways that are now being closed down at O'Hare so that we can dissipate the noise from the takeoffs and landings."

He also says residents of the communities that border O'Hare need to negotiate with the mayor and the city of Chicago to get their concerns addressed.

"That's your job," Noland shot back. "As congressman that's your job to negotiate with the mayor and the FAA and with Jan Schakowsky and with those who refused to actually take an affirmative stance on this."

Bullwinkel said there are already a number of coalitions in place to combat O'Hare noise and expansion.

"The key there is for the people who are involved in the coalition to make sure their voice continues to be heard and that their legislators are there behind them helping lead the way, carry the torch," Bullwinkel said.

Noland also said a third airport is needed to help decrease the number of planes, particularly cargo flights, landing at and departing from O'Hare.

The 8th District includes parts of northwest Cook, northeast DuPage and northeast Kane counties and roughly centers around Schaumburg.

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