

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3213

January 27, 2010

Mr. Jay H. Walder, Chairman & CEO
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Walder:

We would like to take this opportunity to address the draconian Staten Island service cuts proposed by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) this past Friday, January 22nd. We were hopeful that under your leadership the MTA would continue working with us on expanding mass transit options on this transit starved borough while also preserving and enhancing existing service. The message sent this past Friday clearly indicates that this will not be the case.

The cuts under consideration eliminate both express and local bus routes being utilized by thousands of Staten Island residents. This current plan calls for nine routes being eliminated and two other routes would have their weekend service discontinued.

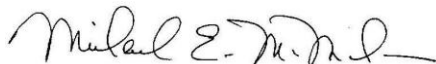
We know that you have recently taken over your position and have not had the opportunity to spend much time on Staten Island yet. Apparently, you have not been briefed that Staten Island has only one passenger rail line serving only a portion of the borough and some of the most saturated roadways in the country. This dearth of mass transit along with a growing population has led to the fact that Staten Island residents endure the longest documented commute in the nation and by far the longest mass transit commute.

These cuts were not wielded with a scalpel by the MTA; they were wielded with an axe on the community with the worst commute in the nation! You should also be aware that the MTA spokesperson who stated that Staten Islanders can still access Manhattan via the Staten Island Ferry quicker than a bus ride has no clue what they are talking about when it comes to Staten Island traffic. Does that individual really think those daily commuters want to pay \$11 round trip for a longer commute?!? We hope you understand how ridiculous a statement that was!

This comment along with these proposed cuts have us extremely worried about where Staten Island stands these days in terms of MTA priorities. As you may or may not be aware, Staten Island's views of your agency have not always been positive. Those opinions had been altered somewhat over the past couple of years. But the message being sent in this service reduction package illustrates a shift back towards Staten Island being underserved by the MTA. It is our sincere hope that you and the Board of Directors address this inequity immediately and reconsider these drastic cuts in service to Staten Island.

The Staten Island delegation welcomes the opportunity to discuss these proposed cuts in greater detail and look forward to working with you on expanding mass transit opportunities here on Staten Island.

Sincerely,



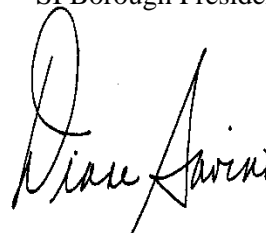
Michael E. McMahon
Congressman, NY -13



James P. Molinaro
SI Borough President



Andrew Lanza
Senator, 24th District



Diane J. Savino
Senator, 23rd District



Michael Cusick
Assemblyman, 63rd District



Lou Tobacco
Assemblyman, 62nd District



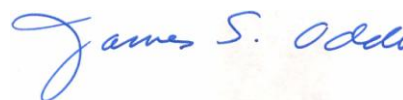
Matthew Titone
Assemblyman, 61st District



Janele Hyer-Spencer
Assemblywoman, 60th District



Vincent Ignizio
Councilman, 51st District



James S. Oddo
Councilman, 50th District



Debi Rose
Councilwoman, 49th District