



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Comments Of State Senator Daniel Squadron Regarding The Citywide Ferry Service Environmental Impact Statement

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My name is Daniel Squadron and I represent the 26th District in the New York State Senate. My district includes the Manhattan neighborhoods of TriBeCa, Battery Park City, the Lower East Side, Chinatown, the Financial District, Greenwich Village, Little Italy, SoHo and the East Village and the Brooklyn neighborhoods of Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Vinegar Hill, DUMBO, Fulton Ferry, Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, and Carroll Gardens.

Thank you to the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development and the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for the opportunity to submit comments to the Citywide Ferry Service Environmental Impact Statement. I strongly support this proposed expansion, and look forward to it continuing to move through the review process.

I have long supported additional transportation options for the many waterfront communities with limited transit options that I represent, along with colleagues. This planned expansion is an important step towards a more comprehensive and resilient transportation system throughout the city. It also presents an important access point to our shared Harbor Park -- a central park for the center of our city -- including Brooklyn Bridge Park, Pier 42, and Governors Island.

I am particularly appreciative of the City's inclusion of year-round ferry service at Atlantic Ave/Pier 6 in Brooklyn, and on the Lower East Side. I have been a long-time advocate for both these stops, and look forward to their upcoming implementation. In the case of the stop on the Lower East Side, which will be a brand new stop, it is important that stakeholder engagement continue on the landing's placement.

The Citywide Ferry Service Request for Proposals (RFP) also presented a number of important options that I urge the EDC to strongly prioritize in considering environmental impacts and in selecting operators.

Year-round Brooklyn/Governors Island ferry service is an important step towards making sure more New Yorkers have access to this incredible public resource. As the Island moves towards more year-round hours, it is crucial we expand access points.

Additionally, as I have noted, while most forms of public transportation have a reduced fare for seniors and people with disabilities, existing ferry service does not. It is important the EDC seriously consider implementing a reduced fare to make new and existing ferry service more accessible to more New Yorkers.

One of the most exciting aspects of this expanded service is the Mayor's commitment to index the price to subway fares, which is a considerable reduction from current fare rates. However, it is important that this change also be implemented on existing East River Ferry service by the time citywide expansions roll-out. Having clear, consistent, and fair rates is important for wider usage and adoption.

In that same vein, I urge the EDC to more closely examine the possibility of integration with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) fare payment system as quickly as possible. Though EDC has indicated they intend to reevaluate fare payment integration once

the MTA has undergone planned fare system upgrades, it remains unclear how long that may take. Given the MTA's dire capital plan funding problems, fare integration should be more seriously considered now.

Thank you again to the City and EDC for making this expansion a reality, and the opportunity to submit comments today. EDC has consistently worked to be a responsive and active partner on existing service. I strongly support this proposed expansion, and look forward to continuing to work with the City as service expansion moves forward.