



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Brooklyn Elected Officials, Community Leaders Call For Agreement on Shore Power at Brooklyn Cruise Terminal

DANIEL L. SQUADRON January 4, 2011



*Time to “Stop Choking Brooklyn!”*

*Cruise Ships Running Highly-Polluting Diesel Generators for Hours in Residential Community; Shore Power Would Provide Cleaner, Safer Power to Docked Ships*

New York, NY– Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron, City Councilmember Brad Lander, Congressmember Nydia Velázquez, State Senator Velmanette Montgomery, City Councilmember Sara González, Congressmember Jerrold Nadler, State Assemblymember

Joan Millman, and Brooklyn community leaders urged city and state agencies, utilities and cruise ship companies to conclude negotiations to use shore power technology at the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal. Cruise ships using the port currently keep their diesel engines running while at the terminal, emitting dangerous fumes for hours at a time. Shore power would allow ships to plug into an electrical grid at the port rather than continuing to run on diesel fuel.

Shore power requires a comprehensive agreement between the New York City Economic Development Corporation (which operates the cruise terminal), the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New York Power Authority, Consolidated Edison, and Carnival cruise lines. The Port Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency have committed \$15 million to build the necessary infrastructure to supply the shore power. Carnival Cruise Lines has committed to retrofit its ships, to enable them to plug into the electrical grid, at a cost of \$1 - \$2 million per ship. All parties have pledged support.

However, after nearly two years of negotiations, the parties have still not reached an agreement on maintenance and operating costs. Senator Squadron, Councilmember Lander, and members of the Brooklyn community have been calling for an agreement for many months.

Senator Daniel Squadron said, "It's time to stop choking Brooklyn. Cruise ships idling at port force Brooklynites to breathe in dirty, dangerous diesel fumes – putting an end to it is long overdue. Shore power is a cleaner, healthier alternative. I know it's a complicated negotiation, but I urge the city, state, utilities, and cruise ship companies to reach an agreement that would make this promise a reality."

"We need a comprehensive shore power agreement now," said Councilmember Brad Lander.

"We've had two years of idling ships, and idling negotiations. We have a tremendous

opportunity to make a real difference in the health of our communities, and the sustainability of our port. We want an agreement before the next ship comes in.”

Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez (D-NY) said, “Cruise ships docked in Brooklyn will emit less pollution when they draw their power from the shore, rather than using on-board diesel engines. The funding is available and negotiations have gone on long enough. It’s time to reach an agreement that enables this job-creating environmental project to move forward.”

Diesel fuel used by cruise ships—called “bunker fuel”—is among the dirtiest and most environmentally hazardous type of fuel available. While docked at the port, a cruise ship with its diesel engine running emits as much pollution as thousands of idling cars.

Shore power technology already has been implemented in several ports in the on the West Coast and Europe and would be the first of its kind on the East Coast of the United States. Community advocates argued that introducing shore power in Brooklyn would catalyze the conversion to shore power throughout the harbor.

State Senator Velmanette Montgomery said, "Shore power is an idea that is long overdue for implementation here in Brooklyn. Not only is it central to enforcing health and environmental justice for the people and businesses of Red Hook, it will also provide economic benefits to the shipping and power industries that will insure healthy growth continues in Red Hook. The obstacles to an agreement are so minor in comparison to the benefits that I say to all the parties--the City, the State, the utilities, and the cruise lines--let's just get this done now. I look forward to working with all my colleagues in government to make shore power a reality in Red Hook."

Councilmember Sara González said, “Asthma rates have always been very high throughout Red Hook and the effect of the airborne particulate matter created by idling cruise ships has

only exacerbated the problem. Our ongoing discussions have progressed too slowly and I urge all parties to step up and reach a comprehensive agreement very, very fast to bring relief for the good folks in Red Hook and the surrounding vicinity.”

“We have the opportunity here to make the Brooklyn Cruise terminal a modern green cruise facility,” said Rep. Jerrold Nadler. “The Port Authority and the Environmental Protection Agency have obtained \$15 million in funding for the installation of shore power, but unfortunately the New York City Economic Development Corp. (EDC) and the New York Power Authority haven’t reached an agreement on the electricity rate. I join with my colleagues in government and call on the Power Authority and EDC to cut the bureaucratic red tape and come to an agreement on the electricity rate, so that we can make this the most environmentally friendly cruise terminal for the Red Hook community and a model of a modern green facility for the cruise industry.”

Assemblywoman Joan Millman said, “I call upon New York City Economic Development Corporation, the New York Power Authority, Con Edison and Carnival cruise lines to work together to quickly come to an agreement. It’s been almost a year since I requested the parties to expedite an agreement and, to date, nothing has been done. The sooner this is done, the better it is for our environment, our residents and businesses, alike.”

Norman Cox, President of the Columbia Waterfront Neighborhood Association, said, “For years our neighborhood has endured pollution caused by ships idling at the piers. The presence of large cruise ships in the past few years has only made conditions worse. There is a growing body of evidence that pollution from ships is responsible for millions of dollars worth of health problems and contributes to global warming. The means to preventing such pollution is no mystery – it requires only that the ships hook up to shore power, a common practice in many ports around the world. There appears to be only one obstacle to implementing the provision of shore power to the cruise ship terminal: the failure of the

Public Service Commission to establish a rate for the electricity. It has been well over a year since the Public Service Commission started hearings on this matter. In February of 2010 we wrote to the PSC urging a resolution to the stalemate, we received no reply and still nothing has been concluded. New York likes to think of itself as a leading city in culture and commerce. Our mayor actively promotes big projects and has established ambitious environmental initiatives. The State of New York has aggressive programs to promote sustainability. Yet achieving this relatively simple and obvious improvement to the public welfare seems beyond their abilities. Our local representatives know how important this issue is for the whole city and they have tirelessly worked for success. It is time for the PSC and the other involved parties to make the effort required to resolve this unconscionable stalemate in the interest of reducing pollution, promoting sustainability and creating a healthy city for us all.”

Brian McCormick of the Brooklyn Greenway Initiative said, “Brooklyn Greenway Initiative joins local residents, environmental advocates, Senator Squadron and Councilmember Lander in full support of bringing shore power to the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal. The degradation of air quality caused by idling ships engines in the Port pose grave health risks for those who live and work in our waterfront neighborhoods and to future users of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway as well. The time to act is long overdue.”

Maria Pagano, President of Carroll Gardens Neighborhood Association, said, “Shore power only makes sense—knowing as we do the pollution idling engines add to the spewing exhaust provided by our wrap around roadways. The Carroll Gardens Neighborhood Association supports this, and every effort to reduce the damages to our air quality caused by the airborne pollutants. We thank you, Norman and our neighbors of the CoWNA organization, for taking this stand. We salute our elected officials, City Councilmember Brad Lander and Senator Dan Squadron for joining with you to snap a link of this toxic choke

chain on our bit of Brooklyn.”

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