



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Lower Manhattan Elected Officials Host Stakeholders' Meeting on Plan for 9/11 Memorial Buses, Push for Community Input

DANIEL L. SQUADRON April 14, 2011

| ISSUE: **CONSTITUENTS CORNER**

For Immediate Release: April 15, 2011

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, State Senator Daniel Squadron, Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, Assemblywoman Deborah Glick and City Councilwoman Margaret Chin announced that Lower Manhattan stakeholders have been brought together to ensure there is community input into the plan for managing tour buses visiting the 9/11 Memorial when it opens in September.

At a meeting today, elected officials met with members of the community, as well as the city Department of Transportation, members of the September 11 Memorial and Museum, business leaders and other stakeholders to begin a dialogue about how to minimize the impact that buses will have on the surrounding community.

The participants discussed ways to combat illegal parking, traffic congestion, idling and other quality of life issues that are expected to arise when the estimated 5 million annual visitors to the memorial begin to arrive.

“The opening of the 9/11 Memorial is an important milestone for Lower Manhattan and will be the fitting centerpiece of the rebuilt World Trade Center,” Silver said. “But we must minimize the negative impact that the influx of visitors and tour buses has on our quality of life. We are concerned about congestion on our streets and sidewalks, idling buses, and other problems that might arise when so many people are coming to this neighborhood each day. We need to ensure that the community is involved in developing the plan to mitigate the impact on our residents and businesses Downtown.”

“As we look forward to the opening of the 9-11 Museum and Memorial and progress on the World Trade Center development, managing the impact of increased visitors and traffic in the area are critical to our community,” Nadler said. “We must work together to make certain that a clear, comprehensive plan is in place so that we can all enjoy downtown. Thank you to Speaker Silver for coordinating this working group and to all of the participants who will be meeting to discuss this important issue.”

“There is no time to spare: we need a detailed, comprehensive plan to manage tour buses in Lower Manhattan,” Squadron said. “Parking tour buses in New Jersey, creating tight rules that prohibit cruising, strengthening enforcement and ending our system of chaotic, unregulated bus stops would help Lower Manhattan thrive, bring order to our streets, protect pedestrians, bolster the PATH system and help harbor ferries carry more people every day. A solid tour bus plan will be a win for Lower Manhattan redevelopment, a win for the business community, and a win for tens of thousands of new Downtown residents. Our task force has gathered to say: we need that plan today.”

“The dedication of a Memorial to mark the 10-year anniversary of 9/11 is set in stone,” Stringer said. “But discussions about the logistical challenge it poses to the community are still in flux. Seven weeks ago my office held a town hall meeting in Tribeca about the future of Ground Zero, and the biggest concern focused on the 900,000 tourists who will be traveling

by bus every year to the 9/11 Memorial, and how the city plans to handle this influx. During the meeting, my office secured a commitment from the Department of Transportation to present site-specific proposals within 4-6 weeks, and I am pleased that today we are one step closer to a final plan. This blueprint is still a work in progress, however, and will undergo close scrutiny from the community before final implementation. I look forward to working with DOT, my fellow elected officials, the local Community Board and the residents of Downtown Manhattan in shaping a plan that honors the 9/11 anniversary and also respects the neighborhood.

“Traffic congestion and air pollution are critical concerns, and any plan must adequately address the needs of the local community,” said Glick.

“The impact of tour buses on the lower Manhattan community is a growing and serious problem,” said Councilmember Margaret Chin. “We are committed to an efficient way to manage the influx of buses to the Memorial site that is respectful and that preserves quality of life for residents in the immediate area. I want to emphasize that there are laws on the books already to help do this. We are here to make sure the City upholds its responsibility to enforce traffic, parking, and idling laws around the World Trade Center site. Our City agencies need to be pro-active in enforcing these laws and protecting our lower Manhattan community; I have every expectation that they will, and I am pleased to finally have them at the table to discuss their plans.”

Today’s meeting is expected to be the first of several that will bring together members of the community to work towards a bus management plan that properly addresses local residents’ concerns.

##