



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Lower Manhattan Electeds Hold Second Stakeholder Meeting on 9/11 Memorial Tour Buses

DANIEL L. SQUADRON May 24, 2011

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### *Stakeholders Take Next Steps To Prepare for Opening of Memorial*

*Elected Officials: With Time Running Out, We Must Minimize Tour Bus Traffic*

LOWER MANHATTAN – Yesterday, Senator Daniel Squadron, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, Assemblymember Deborah Glick, City Councilwoman Margaret Chin, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer brought together stakeholders to prepare for the opening of the 9/11 Memorial and ensure that tour bus traffic does not choke Lower Manhattan come September 12<sup>th</sup>.

This was the second meeting of stakeholders. The New York City Department of Transportation and New York Police Department reported back to residents, business leaders and elected officials on proposals to discourage tour buses and encourage visitors to take the PATH and ferries into Lower Manhattan. These proposals include the first-ever dispatch system for curbside bus pick-up and drop-off, metered bus parking, and increased penalties for illegally-parked buses. While each of the proposed solutions is innovative,

concerns were raised about agency coordination and implementation in time for the 9/11 Memorial's opening this September.

"The more visitors come by PATH and ferry instead of tour buses, the more they will experience all that Lower Manhattan has to offer," Senator Squadron said. "As the clock ticks down, we urgently need creative, innovative solutions to keep tour buses off our streets. It is clear there has been a renewed focus on these ideas in the last weeks, but the question remains whether DOT, NYPD and the other agencies will get solutions in place in time."

"I am hopeful that as we continue to meet with all of the stakeholders to identify needs and potential solutions, we can mitigate the impact of the thousands of additional visitors we will be welcoming to Lower Manhattan beginning in September," said Congressman Nadler. "Thank you to Senator Squadron for hosting today's meeting and to all of the participants for their thoughtful discussion of this important issue."

"We are making progress towards our goal of addressing the potential negative impact that tour buses entering the neighborhood to visit the 9/11 Memorial could have on our community," said Speaker Silver. "With 5 million visitors expected, we need a real commitment from the city that they will increase enforcement of parking and idling laws and create a system that encourages community input and feedback. We are also urging visitors to use mass transit. I look forward to continuing to work with members of the community and the city to ensure residents and visitors alike can come to Lower Manhattan and experience the 9/11 Memorial while maintaining our quality of life."

"I applaud the New York City Department of Transportation, the NYPD, the National September 11 Memorial, and other stakeholders for once again sitting down with the Lower Manhattan community and its elected representatives," said Borough President Stringer.

"While important progress has been made preparing for the Memorial's opening in less than 120 days, the clock is ticking. Between now and September, I look forward to hearing more detailed plans for traffic enforcement and continued input from the Lower Manhattan community."

"I am very pleased for the opportunity to be a part of this open dialogue," said Assemblymember Glick. "I hope that the outcome will result in a positive experience for visitors, and more importantly, for residents of downtown Manhattan."

"Today's meeting was another productive and helpful step towards resolving the looming problem of tour bus congestion in Lower Manhattan," said Councilmember Chin. "There are a number of questions that remain, including the level of enforcement from the NYPD and the final designation of locations for loading and layover. In addition, I remain concerned about creating an exclusion list, to keep residential streets in our community protected from excessive bus and pedestrian traffic. I want to thank DOT, NYPD, MTA, the Port Authority and other agencies for taking the time to meet with us in this taskforce, and for their ongoing work with this complex issue."

Following the initial stakeholders meeting on April 15<sup>th</sup>, the elected officials sent a letter to the Department of Transportation and NYPD urging the agencies to look into specific mechanisms to prevent tour buses from clogging Lower Manhattan's streets and polluting its air.

Problems such as illegal parking, traffic congestion, idling and other quality of life issues are expected to arise when the estimated 5 million annual visitors to the memorial begin to arrive in Lower Manhattan this September.

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