



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron, Colleagues Urge Mta Action on L Train Shutdowns

DANIEL L. SQUADRON February 17, 2012

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SMALL BUSINESS, MTA (METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY), CONSTITUENTS CORNER**

Letter to MTA Highlights Ideas To Protect North Brooklyn Small Businesses Following Meeting on Shutdowns' Impact

Electeds: Commerce Along L Depends on Weekend Visitors

BROOKLYN – Today, State Senator Daniel Squadron, Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, Assemblymember Joseph Lentol, and Councilmember Stephen Levin sent a letter (attached below) to the MTA urging action to mitigate the impact of weekend L train shutdowns on Williamsburg and Greenpoint small businesses.

Yesterday, Senator Squadron, his colleagues and the Northside Merchants Association hosted a meeting with over 30 North Brooklyn businesses who underscored the damaging impact of weekend L train shutdowns on their businesses and brainstormed suggestions that would protect their businesses while allowing necessary work along the line to continue.

Weekend ridership on the L train has jumped by 141 percent in recent years. Last year, Senator Squadron worked with the MTA to increase L train service, which will happen by mid-2012.

However, frequent shut-downs along the line have caused a major strain on local businesses that rely on the L to bring in customers. The L train has been out of service on key weekends for Williamsburg businesses, such as last September's Taste of Williamsburg and Greenpoint, and November's Small Business Saturday.

“Commerce along the L line depends heavily on weekend visitors - especially in Williamsburg and Greenpoint where the L is the primary subway line between Manhattan and Brooklyn,” the elected officials wrote to MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota. “Small business owners face great pressure at a time when the smallest hiccup or interruption of cash flow can mean the difference between surviving or not. Combined with the dramatic growth the North Brooklyn community has seen in recent years, there is clearly a need for improved coordination on transit issues.”

The MTA worked with the Northside Merchants Association and North Brooklyn community to reschedule a planned shutdown in March that would have interfered with the neighborhood's Armory Arts Week. Suggestions for additional MTA action, laid out in the letter, include:

- Scheduling work on the L train overnight on weeknights as part of the 'Fast Track' program that the MTA has implemented on other lines.
- Continuing coordination between the MTA and small businesses to ensure shutdowns are not scheduled during key weekends, such as Taste of Williamsburg or Small Business Saturday.
- Working with the EDC and East River Ferry to increase ferries, cross-honor Metrocards, and/or offer vouchers valid on the ferry during shutdown days.
- Offering buses across the Williamsburg Bridge and between Court Square, Bedford Ave, and Marcy Ave during shutdown days.

- Not shutting down the L and the 7 or the L and the G on the same days.
- Not shutting down the L over three-day weekends.

Yesterday's meeting was also sponsored by the Northside Merchants Association, District Leaders Lincoln Restler and Linda Minucci, and Community Board 1.

###