



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

## Lanza & Cusick Announce Passage of Bill Allowing Nyc to Restore Yellow School Bus Service for Staten Island Students

ANDREW J LANZA March 29, 2012

ALBANY- Senator Andrew Lanza and Assemblyman Michael Cusick today have passed legislation that would exempt New York City from the “Like Circumstances” clause of New York State Education law (S.6027 / A.8683), with regard to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade yellow school busing that was previously provided to Staten Island students. This exemption would allow the New York City Department of Education to restore busing service for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade general education students. The Department of Education cited the “Like Circumstances” clause as the main reason for revoking the variance for 7th and 8th grade students in 2009. This action would remove the “Like Circumstances” barrier from the City Department of Education so that the Administration can work to address this important transportation and safety issue for our school children.

“Staten Island children live further away from school, on average, than any other children in New York City,” said Senator Andrew Lanza. “Staten Island also has fewer public transportation options, sidewalks and traffic signals, leaving our children at greater risk in the absence of bus service. For us, school bus service is a critical need and not a luxury. I look forward to working with Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Walcott to restore school bus service for our students in a way that keeps them safe as they travel to and from school.”

“Staten Island has unique transportation situation that needs to be addressed. It is important for the safety of our children that we remove all barriers that would prevent the city from providing this necessary service.” said Cusick. “We look forward to working with the Mayor and Chancellor Walcott to resolve this issue for the safety of our children.”

The New York City Department of Education typically only provides school bus service to students through sixth grade, however, they have had the power to grant variances to seventh and eighth grade students. Over the past 18 years, variances have been granted to 70 schools where the options with respect to public transportation are limited, including seventh and eighth graders. In September of 2009, the New York City Department of Education revoked a variance that allowed 7th and 8th graders to be eligible for yellow school bus service. This decision affected 4,600 general education students at public and non-public schools city-wide. Of those students, 2,940 live on Staten Island where mass-transit options are limited.

“We look forward to working with the Mayor and Chancellor Walcott to resolve this issue for the safety of our children.” said Cusick

“As I have said all along, ultimately a legislative solution in cooperation with the Administration is the only guarantee the people of Staten Island can rest upon with this issue,” said Senator Lanza.

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