



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella Announces Funding Allocation for Mta Bus Restoration Study

TONY AVELLA April 3, 2014

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*The funds appropriation for the study, which totals \$500,000, was allocated by Senator Avella as part of the State Executive Budget*

(BAYSIDE, Queens) Today, Senator Avella was joined by Assembly Member Nily Rozic, representatives from the office of Assembly Member David Weprin, and Queens civic leaders at a press conference announcing a \$500,000 funding allocation to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) for a bus service restoration study in Northeast Queens.

The funding was secured by Senator Avella during this year's Executive Budget negotiations to address the decreased bus service and lack of mass transportation options throughout his 11<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District.

The MTA will now be required to immediately initiate a year-long study of ways to improve bus service and examine the effects of service cuts implemented in the area in the last five years. The MTA will also be required to seek and consider direct public input, including input from local community boards, regarding any changes or restorations necessary.

"Northeast Queens and specifically, the 11<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District has always been underserved in terms of bus service and mass transportation options," stated Senator Avella. "That is why it is vitally important for the MTA to do this study and thoroughly examine the feasibility of extending or rerouting existing bus routes in these neighborhoods. My constituents depend on bus service so I was very glad that I was able to include \$500,000 allocation in the State budget. The study can only help in identifying those areas where we urgently need to restore bus routes or create new ones. That is why it is a great first step towards improving bus service in my District."

Following the completion of their report, MTA will be required to report their findings to the Governor, Assembly Speaker and Senate leaders for further review.

"We must hold the MTA accountable to Queens transit riders," said Assemblywoman Nily Rozic (D,WF-Fresh Meadows). "Requiring the MTA to study how to improve bus service in Northeast Queens delivers on our commitment to commuters--finding cost-effective and efficient ways to make improvements that make a dramatic difference for riders who need it most. I want to thank Senator Tony Avella for his leadership and hard work on this issue."

Prior to the press conference, Assembly Member David Weprin issued a statement stating that "The budget allocation for a Bus Service Study for North East Queens is a big win for the community. I look forward to the study, as it is the first step in reducing commuting time for straphangers, and alleviating traffic for drivers in the area."

Senator Avella concluded, "I look forward to working with the MTA as well as the local community boards on this important study which I am confident will ultimately lead to increased bus service in Northeast Queens."