



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Adriano Espallat

Senator Espallat Encourages the Creation and Expansion of Select Bus Service on 125th Street

ADRIANO ESPALLAT April 23, 2014



As SBS Sprouts on 125th, Levine Says Bus Lanes Could Extend West This Fall

Stephen Miller, [StreetsBlog NYC](#)

After an on-again, off-again struggle, Select Bus Service on 125th Street is now close to launching. Off-board fare payment machines have been installed, but not yet turned on, for

M60 riders. Next up is striping for dedicated bus lanes, which were scaled back after opposition from elected officials. Now, a glimmer of hope: Council Member Mark Levine says West Harlem could get its bus lanes as soon as this fall.

The bus-only lanes were initially slated to run between Morningside and Second Avenues, but the western half was cut off at Lenox Avenue after local elected officials, led by State Senator Bill Perkins, protested. Council Member Mark Levine and State Senator Adriano Espaillat, who represent West Harlem, have pressed DOT to revive the original plan. Espaillat's office said today that it hopes the popularity of SBS once it starts service will build momentum for completing the bus lanes. Levine's office said it has been meeting with "all the parties involved" and hopes the bus lanes will be extended west by this fall.

Unlike most other SBS routes, bus lanes on 125th Street will not be camera-enforced. The state legislation allowing bus lane cameras restricts them to six routes: Fordham Road, First and Second Avenues, Hylan Boulevard, 34th Street, Nostrand Avenue, and an undesignated route in Queens. (The borough's first SBS route, being planned now, is slated for Woodhaven and Cross Bay Boulevards.) It's up to NYPD precincts to keep drivers out of bus lanes along Webster Avenue, 125th Street, and anywhere else the city sets aside street space for buses.

Another feature that would really help bus riders on 125th Street is flashing lights on SBS buses. There are four lines that will use 125th Street's new bus lanes. The M60 is the one line that will receive limited-stop and off-board fare payment upgrades. With so many local buses running alongside the M60 SBS, many riders will have to figure out whether to pay before boarding an M60 or wait and swipe their MetroCards onboard a local bus.

Flashing lights on SBS buses helped distinguish them from local buses, but have been turned off since Staten Island legislators exploited a little-known state law in 2012. Efforts to bring the lights back have since stalled in Albany. DOT said last October that 125th Street SBS

would launch this month. The city's latest PlaNYC progress report says the route will launch in May, but yesterday, DOT did not offer a specific date, saying only that it will start service later this spring.