



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senator Gianaris, Western Queens Leaders Urge MTA to Adopt Q103 Increase Plan

MICHAEL GIANARIS May 19, 2014

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION**

(Astoria, NY) Senator Michael Gianaris, elected officials, and cultural institutions from Astoria and Long Island City urged the MTA to adopt a proposed plan under consideration at its Monday meeting that would institute increased service on the Q103 Bus line. Under this plan the Q103, which connects the two Queens waterfront neighborhoods along Vernon Boulevard, would see expanded weekday service hours and would finally run on weekends thanks to an MTA trial program that would begin in June. The plan, long advocated by local leaders, still requires final approval from the New York City Transit and Bus Committee of the MTA Board on Monday April 28th.

“At long last, weekend service on the Q103 bus line is in sight,” **said Senator Gianaris.** “I urge the MTA to approve this service increase and recognize that our community’s need for better mass transit is pressing. The need for more public transportation in our area will only continue to grow, especially on weekends, as more people flock to our waterfront to visit our restaurants, parks, and cultural institutions. Astoria and Long Island City have become hubs for the arts, and New Yorkers should finally be able to travel between them on the Vernon Boulevard bus lines on Saturdays and Sundays.”

“I commend the local elected officials for their hard work and tireless efforts on behalf of the community to bring this issue to a positive resolution. I support the MTA Bus plan that would soon be offering weekend service on the popular Q103 bus line and would add an extra 90 minutes of service on the Q103 each weeknight,” **said Queens Borough President Melinda Katz.** “The Q103 serves a fast-growing section of western Queens that is home to many new and long-time residents as well as thriving local businesses that have needed increased mass transit. Expanded service hours on the Q103 would address this need and help ensure that western Queens continues to be a desirable place to live, work and visit.”

“I would urge the MTA to approve the proposed plan that would increase bus service for the Q103 this summer” **said Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan.** “I would like to thank Senator Gianaris for pushing improvements that will provide for a more efficient and reliable bus service for the Long Island City and Astoria communities.”

Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas said, “With this plan, Astoria and LIC residents would see a much-needed trial expansion of Q103 service beginning this summer. I urge the MTA to move forward in adopting this proposal and eventually hope to see this service expansion become permanent. Our fast-growing community can only continue to flourish with effective transit options for its residents and workers; I congratulate Senator Gianaris and the dedicated efforts of local transit advocates for their continued hard work on behalf of the commuters of western Queens.”

“The addition of weekend service and extended weekday hours along the Q103 bus route will be beneficial to the thousands of residents who live in Western Queens,” **said New York City Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer.** “The expansion of service will not only benefit the increasing amount riders but it will also give our growing cultural institutions that ability to generate more traffic to their venues. I urge the MTA to approve their plans for expansion of this service and give the riders of Western Queens alternative transportation

options.”

Council Member Costa Constantinides said, "The MTA increasing Q103 service this summer would be a positive step in improving transportation options in our community. The Vernon Boulevard corridor has been one of the under-served transit thoroughfares in Western Queens. Increasing bus service would be a vital resource to commuters traveling to Manhattan and to residents connecting from Astoria to Long Island City. I commend Senator Gianaris for his leadership on this important issue."

Jess Nizar, Senior Organizer at the Riders Alliance, said, "The Q103 is the only means of public transportation along Astoria's waterfront community. It's essential that local residents have reliable and expanded bus service so that they can access community institutions, jobs, and healthcare. We urge the MTA to increase service on the Q103 and thank State Senator Gianaris for his ongoing commitment to serve the transportation needs of Astoria's residents."

“The Chocolate Factory is grateful to the Senator for making the Q103 a priority since it is the only public transportation option connecting the western Queens waterfront,” **said Sheila Lewandowski, Executive Director of The Chocolate Factory Theater.** “This absence of public transportation is like a barrier between our communities north and south. Everyone should be able to get to Socrates or The Chocolate Factory or to the Queensborough Bridge or to free kayaking during the summers in Hallet's Cove.”

"The Q103 service is a vital link for the cultural organizations of Western Queens,” **said Jenny Dixon, Director of The Noguchi Museum.** “It enables visitors to go from The Noguchi Museum & Socrates Sculpture Park in the north to SculptureCenter, MoMA/PS1, Dorsky Gallery and the Chocolate Factory to the south. We urge the MTA to offer weekend service on the Q103 and we thank our elected officials from Senator Gianaris, City Council Member & Majority

Leader Jimmy Van Bramer and many others who have been advocating tirelessly for better transit options on behalf of all our visitors and the residents of Queens."

"The Q103 is a vital bus line for Western Queens - an area truly suffering from the lack of public transportation options," **said John Hatfield, Executive Director of Socrates Sculpture Park.**

"The closest subway is nearly a mile away. Having access to Q103 service on weekends would be a step in the right direction, and we applaud the efforts of Senator Michael Gianaris and our elected officials who are working hard to increase transportation options for thousands of Socrates Sculpture Park and Noguchi Museum visitors."

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