



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Elected Officials Announce MTA Response to Bus Concerns in West Village

DANIEL L. SQUADRON October 31, 2014

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### **Electeds: Agency Agrees To Assess M5 & M21 To Improve Service**

#### **Agency Responding To Summer Town Hall And Local Push**

MANHATTAN – State Senator Squadron, Borough President Brewer, State Senator Hoylman, Assemblymember Glick, and Councilmembers Johnson and Chin today announced the MTA's response to concerns raised at a Town Hall on Buses, Subways, and Transit held this summer. The MTA agreed to assess and improve the M5 and the M21 which are particularly important to residents in Greenwich Village and SoHo. The elected officials sent a letter to New York City Transit President Carmen Bianco, attached, thanking him for the MTA's participation in the Town Hall and commitment to assessing the lines for improved service.

At the July 30th town hall, residents expressed concerns about bunching and delays on the M5, as well as balancing express with local service. In response, the MTA will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the line, propose solutions, and engage in a dialogue with the community before adopting a plan to improve service.

Residents also expressed concerns about infrequent service on the M21, which, in light of the absence of M1 service, is an important east-west artery along Houston Street that allows riders to transfer to bus lines that travel north, and travel to the east side for affordable groceries and health care services. Responding to these concerns, the MTA has agreed to assess service quality, ridership and performance of the M21, report the information to elected officials and the community, and propose solutions based on the findings.

"By bringing together the MTA and the community, we let residents share their concerns and propose solutions that could best serve their needs," said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**. "Now the MTA is taking a real look at

the issues. I thank my colleagues for their leadership and the MTA for taking these steps in response to our Town Hall, and I look forward to continuing to work with the agency, my colleagues, and the community to improve service.”

“Greenwich Village and SoHo have suffered from many bus route cuts and changes in recent years, which have made life more difficult for the area’s senior and disabled population to reach healthcare providers or affordable shopping. It’s also subjected all residents of and visitors to the neighborhoods long waits and overcrowded buses. I want to thank the MTA for beginning to hear the frustrations of the community and I look forward to continuing to work with them to help deliver the convenient transit service these neighborhoods deserve,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**.

“I applaud Senator Squadron’s leadership in addressing our community’s transit concerns.” said **State Senator Brad Hoylman**. “Since service cuts were implemented in 2010, many bus riders who live and work in Greenwich Village and SoHo have struggled to get where they need to go. I appreciate MTA New York City Transit’s recognition of riders’ concerns and its commitment to subject the M5 and M21 lines in particular to comprehensive assessment. I am hopeful the agency will agree to the service restorations our constituents want and need.”

“I’m pleased that the MTA has agreed to take a serious look at the bus service downtown, where riders have suffered from long waits, overcrowded buses, and inadequate routes for too long,” said **Assemblymember Deborah Glick**. “I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues and the MTA to ensure that that our constituents get the improvements they need.”

“It’s vital to provide accessible and reliable public transit options for all members of our Lower Manhattan community, and thorough reviews of the problematic M5 and M21 bus lines are a necessary step in making that happen,” said **Councilmember Margaret Chin**. “I’m pleased that the MTA has answered our call and agreed to assess the quality of service on these bus lines, as well as agreeing to keep the community informed on their plans for improvements.”

“The M5 and M21 bus lines are both important public transit arteries for Village residents,” said **Councilmember Corey Johnson**, “and yet both lines have major problems. The M5’s unpredictability complicates travel for the elderly and disabled who use the bus route for transportation and the M21’s service is infrequent, which leads to it being a crowded bus route. I appreciate that the MTA has acknowledged these problems and am grateful that it will be presenting plans to the community for their input in the months to come.”

The town hall, held on July 30<sup>th</sup>, focused on addressing concerns over bus service in Greenwich Village and SoHo. It was co-hosted by the signatories of today’s letter. It raised other issues, most related to a cut in services in 2010 that resulted in lost M5 service along Houston Street, lost M1 service to and from South Ferry during rush hour, re-routing

of the M3 away from University Place, and the elimination of the M6, which effectively made one bus line (the M5) assume the ridership of two lines along Broadway and Church/6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, leaving fewer options and less reliable service for bus users.

The elected officials' letter to New York City Transit President Carmen Bianco is below.