



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Senator Hoylman Introduces Legislation to Restore Identifying Lights to City Select Bus Service

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL April 28, 2014

New York, NY— Today, State Senator Brad Hoylman announced the introduction of legislation ([S.7068](#)) to permit New York City Transit (NYCT) to use flashing purple lights on Select Bus Service (SBS) buses, which require riders to pay at a sidewalk machine before boarding, rather than paying on-board with a Metrocard or exact change, as they must do on traditional buses.

When SBS Service was first introduced in New York City in June 2008, flashing blue lights were built into the vehicles' destination signs to alert riders of these specialized buses. However, the blue lights were suspended in January 2013 after New York City Transit was informed that state law prohibits use of colored and flashing lights by non-emergency vehicles.

**State Senator Brad Hoylman said:** "It's hard to believe we need Albany approval to change the color of lights on select buses in New York City, but we do. That said, it's important we pass legislation that enables select buses to use purple colored lights to allow thousands of riders -- many of them my constituents -- to distinguish from a distance SBS buses from traditional buses, giving riders time determine whether they need to pre-pay the SBS fare or take a local bus. Plus, purple lights won't cause confusion with emergency vehicles because they don't

use this color.”

Senator Hoylman’s Manhattan district includes significant portions of the M15 SBS route, which runs on First and Second Avenues between 125th Street and South Ferry, and the M34 SBS route, which runs crosstown on 34th Street. Many of Senator Hoylman’s constituents, as well as Manhattan Community Board 6 (CB6), have called for the return of SBS buses’ identifying lights.

**State Senator Liz Krueger said:** “The flashing lights were a necessary and frankly comforting signal to New Yorkers waiting to catch a bus that a Select Bus was on the way, and they were also an important tool to help SBS buses get through traffic on the often congested routes they serve. I fully support Sen. Hoylman's effort to get the flashing lights restored, and look forward to seeing those lights on SBS routes once again.”

**Sandro Sherrod, Chair of CB6, said:** “CB6 received numerous calls and emails once the SBS flashing lights went dark. Residents of our district have clearly spoken out on this issue and it is time we once again have this technologically simple yet highly effective tool for commuters.”

**Lawrence Scheyer, New York lawyer, Stuyvesant Town/PCV resident and CB6 board member, said:** “Especially during long waits for buses on dark and stormy and frigid nights, the first sighting of the SBS bus’ signature twin beacons of blinking light in the distance was reassuring to all waiting bus passengers. At major stops where riders wait at different locations for local or Select buses such early warning provided ample opportunity for everybody, calmly, to pre-pay at curbside kiosks and obtain receipts. I observed local bus riders, too, were less anxious if the bus skipped their stop. Our community has a large number of bus riders, and in the fifteen plus months since the lights were precipitously extinguished by the MTA (without having an acceptable alternative ready), the level of

anxiety has been palpable. In the resulting confusion over indistinguishable buses, every one of us worries about the real possibility of our own bus leaving without us.”

Senator Hoylman’s bill, which is the same as Assembly Bill 6076-C, amends subdivision 41 of section 375 of the Vehicle and Traffic Law to add a new subparagraph 1-a so that Metropolitan Transit Authority and NYCT buses that are used on SBS Routes are permitted to use flashing purple lights when running along Select Bus Service route.

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