



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo Calls for Transparency , Community Involvement in Rockaway Ferry Selection Process

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR. March 4, 2016

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Howard Beach, NY (March 4, 2016) As plans are made for Rockaway to finally see the return of its ferry next year, Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. is urging the city to consider all factors and ensure the community is included in the decision before signing a contract.

After attending a meeting in Rockaway last week hosted by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Addabbo cited several items that should be taken into account before awarding a contract simply to the lowest bidder. With several ferry operators already in place who currently do business with the city, running vessels through various unique waterways surrounding New York, the Senator is urging Mayor de Blasio to consider contracting with a company that can boast experience and offer better economic advantages than an out-of-state business.

“Rockaway residents and I certainly know the severe need for improved transportation on the peninsula,” said Addabbo. “That is why the success of this ferry initiative, and ultimately the success of the Rockaway peninsula, is dependent on making sure the city chooses the right operator. The meeting I recently attending with EDC and the community highlighted the fact that the lowest bidder is not always necessarily the most responsible choice, and there are many other factors besides the price tag that we must keep in mind. It is important

that whichever operator is ultimately chosen can promise jobs to Rockaway residents and can also ensure that the already agreed upon fare to ride the ferry stays the same, regardless of operating costs.”

While Mayor de Blasio previously announced that the cost of a ferry ride will be the equivalent of a subway or bus ride, Addabbo is also committed to advocating for a senior citizen discount, just as the MTA offers on its other forms of transportation, in the future. He is also requesting that ferry riders receive a free transfer to any MTA train or bus following a paid boat ride to ensure Rockaway residents are given the same transit opportunities as commuters in other parts of the city.

Addabbo also noted a promise made by Mayor de Blasio when announcing the resurrected ferry service in which the Mayor committed to choosing an operator that would provide newly-constructed boats for this project, a promise which the Senator said must be kept. He also believes the community, or minimally the city, should be able to inspect the boats from a potential ferry operator prior to any final deal being signed.

In addition, Addabbo has made it a priority to seriously explore the community’s funding request, made through NY Rising, for roughly \$8 million to build a proper dock for these boats and their riders to use.

“Reviving the Rockaway Ferry was one of Mayor de Blasio’s major guarantees to a community that is counting on his administration to finally devise a solution to decades of deplorable transportation services,” said Addabbo. “The process to bring back this service, and how successful it becomes, is what the current mayor’s administration will be remembered for and judged on in Rockaway for years to come. Community involvement in this process is critical, and I know Rockaway will not stand by silently.”