



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Statement From Senate Majority Leader John J. Flanagan Regarding LIRR's Third Track Project

JOHN J. FLANAGAN July 12, 2017

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Over the course of the last few weeks, we've had internal and external discussions about the proposed "third track" project. From the outset, my only motivation has been to do what is right for Long Island commuters and their families, and for the hardworking taxpayers who live here. I was born and raised on Long Island, and it's where I chose to raise my family. I care deeply about our region's future.

There have always been short and long-term issues to consider, and it was wrong for some to pit the promise of something new against incredibly important repairs that exist every day in the lives of real people and real taxpayers.

We can and should have transformative investments that benefit Long Island - - that goes without saying. However, on a very basic level the MTA must get people safely from point A to point B. That too is extraordinarily, and perhaps beyond, important.

I have had direct and frank conversations with the Governor, new MTA Chairman Joe Lhota and my Senate Republican colleagues who represent Long Island. I have listened to their thoughts and concerns, and relayed to them what I believe is important, especially in light of the fact that while we are an integral part of state government, the entities we are talking about fall under the auspices of the Governor and the Mayor. Each of these discussions has moved us closer to resolution.

I'm pleased that communities impacted by the proposed "third track" will receive the safety and quality-of-life upgrades they have said were critical. I'm glad that we're talking about renovated stations and new parking garages, and that Penn Station's outdated signal system will soon be modernized. And, I'm thrilled that the Governor shares our belief that other transformative investments for Long Island should be occurring right alongside the "third track."

There is more work to be done to ensure Long Island Rail Road commuters have the short-and-long-term transit fixes they need and deserve, and it is my hope that Senate Republicans can be part of the solution.

All along, we have listened to our constituents and endeavored to do the right thing. On behalf of the Senate Majority, Senator Marty Golden, our representative on the MTA's Capital Program Review Board and a staunch advocate for the needs of his own community,

will vote to allow the proposed "third track" project to move forward.