



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

## Addabbo, Pheffer Amato respond to MTA postponing Cross Bay Bridge toll rebate program

SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. June 9, 2020

| ISSUE: **MTA, CROSS BAY BRIDGE TOLL, ADDABBO**

The MTA is feeling the economic impact of the Coronavirus with ridership decreasing by up to 90 percent in the subway system as social distancing is preventing people from being in packed subway cars and buses. Due to this strain, the MTA announced that the planned toll rebate program on the Cross Bay Bridge will be suspended until further notice.

Originally, New York State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., and Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato worked to get the MTA to provide a refund for the toll on the Cross Bay Bridge — which connects the mainland to the Rockaway peninsula — for all Queens residents. Through EZ-Pass, drivers of vehicles registered in Queens will receive the money for the toll back as a credit on their bill. This was supposed to go into effect this summer.

“We have all been negatively affected by the Coronavirus and the MTA is no exception. The MTA is suffering greatly due to the COVID-19 pandemic as fewer and fewer people in the city are taking public transportation, with reports estimating the MTA losing nearly \$125 million dollars per week,” Addabbo said. “I am disappointed that the MTA will be postponing the toll rebate program on the Cross Bay Bridge until further notice. Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato and I worked diligently to get the rebate, but we understand how the virus has adversely affected financial need facing the MTA during this pandemic. We remain

optimistic that once we have the Coronavirus under control, the Cross Bay Bridge will be free for Queens residents, and encourage more people to visit the Rockaways and support the local businesses.”

With the MTA now closing subway service from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m. each night for overnight cleaning operations, they will be taking in even less money.

“To say I’m disappointed by the postponement of the Queens Resident Cross Bay Bridge Rebate is an understatement, but I understand that the MTA is experiencing never before seen economic hardship and tough decisions have to be made during unprecedented times,” Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato said. “We fought so hard for this, for our communities, and it was seen as something that would never be able to happen. Just because the rebate is on PAUSE like the rest of us, does not mean we will not fight to make sure it’s reinstated as soon as possible as we help our state recover from the crippling economic damage this pandemic has caused.”

Addabbo and Pheffer Amato will continue to update the community on when this rebate program will go into effect as the situation develops.