



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew Gounardes

## Legislature Passes Bill to Establish Selection Criteria for MTA Subway Accessibility Improvements

ANDREW GOUNARDES July 23, 2020

| ISSUE: **NYS SENATOR ANDREW GOUNARDES, S6430, SUBWAY ACCESSIBILITY, MTA**

**ALBANY, NY** – The fight for subway accessibility has taken one more step forward with the passage of legislation from State Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz through both chambers this week. The legislation, [A8127/S6430](#), would establish selection criteria for the MTA to use when evaluating which subway stations to prioritize for accessibility improvements.

Under the Fast Forward plan proposed by former NYCT President Andy Byford, the MTA had agreed to make accessibility improvements at 50 stations as part of the 2020-2024 MTA Capital Plan. An economic crisis brought on by COVID-19 has cast doubt on whether the MTA will still go forward with improvements at all 50 stations as they work to bring ADA compliance to all 472 subway stations citywide. Currently, the less than one-quarter of subway stations are fully compliant with ADA requirements.

The bill requires the MTA to fully develop criteria to determine how to best prioritize subway stations for accessibility improvement and to make both the methodology and the finalized criteria publicly available. The minimum selection criteria established by the bill are: citywide geographic coverage, transit transfer options, annual ridership volume, census tract data for senior and disabled populations and percentage of those populations in poverty, residential density of surrounding neighborhoods, and proximity to medical centers, schools, parks, business districts, cultural hubs, and senior centers.

The legislative pair views this bill as a first step towards full subway accessibility throughout the MTA system. This bill includes one element of a comprehensive subway accessibility bill that was unveiled in 2019. In addition to selection criteria, Assemblyman Dinowitz and State Senator Gounardes are working alongside advocates to require the MTA to include accessibility improvements during station closures or renovations longer than six months as well as the codification of accessibility goals established in Fast Forward.

**Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz (D - Bronx) said:** “The fight for progress is long and arduous, but I am very proud that we have taken one step closer to a fully accessible subway system. It is imperative that the MTA does not just pick subway stations that are easy or convenient in order to hit their target numbers, but instead that they pick stations which will have the biggest benefit for riders with disabilities and other mobility limitations. I am grateful to the hard work of so many advocates who have been fighting this fight for many years, and I look forward to continuing our push for full subway accessibility alongside them and State Senator Gounardes.”

**State Senator Andrew Gounardes (D - Brooklyn) said:** “We have a long way to go to make our MTA accessible but this is a step forward. Criteria for determining which stations will be made accessible is a hallmark of good governance and makes concrete action more likely. New Yorkers with disabilities cannot wait to have equal access to their public transportation network. Holding the MTA accountable for accessibility is more important than ever because of the current budget gaps. The MTA needs to prioritize, and it must prioritize its riders first.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S6430

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Relates to capital program plans of the metropolitan transportation authority

June 10, 2019

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Andrew Gounardes**

Do you support this bill?