



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

SENATOR BIAGGI AND ASSEMBLYMEMBER GONZÁLEZ-ROJAS PASS LEGISLATION TO EXPAND BIKE ACCESS ON THE MTA

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI June 11, 2021

ALBANY, NY – This week, the New York State Senate and Assembly passed legislation sponsored by Senator Alessandra Biaggi and Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas to promote cycling and pedestrian access on MTA bridges and stations in New York City. S4943B/A6235 requires the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), in consultation with the Long Island Rail Road Commuter's Council, the Metro-North Rail Commuter's Council and the New York City Transit Authority Advisory Council, to develop a strategic plan to promote cycling and pedestrian access on all MTA bridges and commuter rail stations. Additionally, this legislation requires the MTA to consider and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian access when planning capital projects.

“As a record number of New Yorkers turn to sustainable and cleaner forms of transportation, we must ensure our MTA infrastructure is welcoming and accessible to cyclists and pedestrians. By expanding cycling and pedestrian access on MTA bridges and stations, we can fully connect all five boroughs of New York City for our commuting and working New Yorkers and encourage more residents to switch to clean forms of transportation. I would like to thank Jon Orcutt from Bike NY and Eric McClure from StreetsPAC for their commitment to this bill and advocacy on behalf of cyclists in New York. I also want to extend my gratitude to Assemblymember González-Rojas for her partnership on this

legislation in the Assembly and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins for prioritizing this issue,” **said State Senator Alessandra Biaggi.**

“The positive health and environmental outcomes of cycling are well-founded so we must provide as much access to this mode of transportation as possible. I’m proud to have sponsored this legislation with Senator Biaggi, which will result in a mechanism for the voices and concerns of cyclists to be heard by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and will translate into a strategic plan. I want to thank Speaker Heastie for bringing the bill to a vote and the advocates at Bike New York, Streets PAC, Transportation Alternatives, and more for their work on this legislation,” **said Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas.**

“With bike use booming and urban travel patterns realigning in the wake of COVID, the Legislature’s passage of the MTA Bike Access bill couldn’t be more timely. All of the MTA’s bridges connect NYC boroughs, yet not one permits bicycling. Biking to transit stations is a proven low-cost sustainability strategy that New York has barely acknowledged. This needs to change, and it will change thanks to the efforts of State Senator Biaggi and Assemblymember González-Rojas, their colleagues who co-sponsored the legislation and the civic coalition that backed it. We joined Governor Cuomo when he cut the ribbon on the new Kosciuszko Bridge bike path, and look forward to him signing this bill as a step toward even greater bike access for New Yorkers,” **said Jon Orcutt, Advocacy Director for Bike New York.**

“We’re immensely grateful to Senator Biaggi and Assemblymember González-Rojas, and their respective staff, for taking the MTA bike access bill from idea to passage in just a few months’ time. This legislation will greatly improve commuter and recreational cycling options for New Yorkers, and engender a major increase in multi-modal bike-to-transit trips. Thanks as well to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie for bringing the bill to a vote. We urge the Governor to sign it into law without delay,” **said Eric McClure, StreetsPAC Executive Director.**

"Now more than ever, cycling plays a central role in New York's transportation network. For too long, MTA bridges have been broken links, when they should provide safe passage for cyclists. Thanks to the vision and leadership of Senator Biaggi and Assemblymember González-Rojas, this bill opens up our infrastructure in a powerful advance for both access and equity. The governor should sign it immediately," **said Danny Pearlstein, Policy & Communications Director at Riders Alliance.**

"At a time when the City of New York is creating safe passage for bicyclists on city-operated bridges, the MTA refuses to open access for cyclists and pedestrians on the Verrazzano Bridge and other state-operated bridges. At a time when the City of New York is adding 10,000 new bike racks over the next two years, not a single MTA asset has installed secure bike parking for commuters during the ongoing bike boom. Passage of this bill is an important step toward bringing the MTA up to speed and meeting the needs of New Yorkers who bike. On behalf of all Transportation Alternatives members citywide, I thank Senator Biaggi, Assemblymember González-Rojas, and our advocacy partners for their determined work to get this bill across the finish line," **said Danny Harris, Executive Director at Transportation Alternatives.**

"We applaud Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas and State Senator Alessandra Biaggi for fighting to ensure voices of cyclists and pedestrians are part of the MTA's planning process. Recent data shows more than eight of ten residents support investing more in public transportation and expanding protected cycling lanes – and it is important their voices are part of critical conversations regarding the future plans of their transportation system," **said Kate Slevin, Senior Vice President of State Programs and Advocacy at Regional Plan Association.**

"We applaud Assembly Member González-Rojas and Senator Biaggi for their leadership on this transformative legislation for active transportation, recreation and community connection. Use of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway more than doubled over the last year.

More and better inter-borough pedestrian and bike connections via MTA Bridges are vital to New York's future," **said Terri Carta, Executive Director of Brooklyn Greenway Initiative.**

"We're very happy to see this bill near the finish line. We've been disappointed with the MTA in the past, but we're hopeful that its leadership can use the opportunity to take a cue from all of its other peers in the region, and make strides on meaningful pedestrian and bike access across the Verrazzano and Marine Parkway bridges. Our heartfelt thanks go out to Senator Biaggi and Assemblymember González-Rojas for taking up this cause - these two bridges are in our backyard, not theirs, but they've illustrated that the current lack of connectivity from outer boroughs to each other is an issue that affects residents citywide," **said Brian Hedden, co-founder of Bike South Brooklyn Co-Founder.**

"Thank you, Senator Biaggi and Assemblymember González-Rojas, and respective staff. We're thrilled to see this bill passed and to see the transformative impact it will have on the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge. The bill has the ability to revolutionize access to this historic bridge and address a long standing inequality by adding pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. We extend our gratitude to Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie for bringing the bill to a quick vote. We urge the Governor to sign it into law," **said Daelin Fischman, co-chair of the Harbor Ring Committee.**

"Bike Tarrytown thanks our Legislators Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins, Senator Harckham and Assembly Member Abinanti for passing this much needed bill. We hope Governor Cuomo signs it. This will enable us to enhance our collaboration with the MTA on improving access to train stations, trains and bridges for people walking and cycling. Doing so will ultimately improve the economy and health of everyone in the region and help New York meet its carbon emission reduction goals," **said Dan Convissor, Director of Bike Tarrytown.**

This bill requires the MTA and relevant councils to develop a strategic action plan to improve cycling and pedestrian access on MTA bridges, bike parking at MTA subway and commuter

rail stations, and bike access on board MTA equipment. Within one year, the MTA must submit a report to the Governor and Legislature and make it available online. The bill also adds additional members to the Long Island Rail Road Commuter's Council (1), the Metro-North Rail Commuter's Council (1) and the New York City Transit Authority Advisory Council (3) with a demonstrated expertise or interest in bicycle and pedestrian access.

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