



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Anna M. Kaplan

## Senator Kaplan & Assemblywoman Sillitti Announce Victory in Movement to Save Express Train Service on North Shore

SENATOR ANNA M. KAPLAN September 28, 2022

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*Following months of advocacy led by Senator Anna M. Kaplan and Assemblywoman Gina L. Sillitti that engaged thousands of north shore residents to make their voices heard, LIRR officials today announced they were abandoning plans to eliminate express train service for the Port Washington LIRR line*

*Kaplan and Sillitti joined Interim LIRR President Catherine Rinaldi to announce the continuation of express train service at a media event at the Port Washington Train Station where much of the*

*community outreach took place over the months of June, July and August*

*Kaplan and Sillitti are continuing to advocate for further service expansions which require investing in needed infrastructure at the Port Washington Rail Yard*

**PORT WASHINGTON, NY (September 28, 2022)** - Today, New York State Senator **Anna M. Kaplan** (D-Port Washington) and Assemblywoman **Gina L. Sillitti** (D-Port Washington) joined **Long Island Rail Road Interim President and Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi** for a press conference at the Port Washington LIRR Station to announce that LIRR officials had heard the concerns of the community and were abandoning plans to eliminate express train service to Penn Station on the Port Washington Branch of the LIRR. The announcement followed months of community outreach and advocacy led by Senator Kaplan and Assemblywoman Sillitti that engaged thousands of north shore residents to make their voices heard. While the announcement is welcomed news, Senator Kaplan and Assemblywoman Sillitti are continuing to advocate for further express train service expansions for the community which require investing in needed infrastructure at the Port Washington Rail Yard.

**Senator Anna M. Kaplan** said “When the MTA proposed cutting our express train service on the north shore, I asked my neighbors to join me in speaking out by making their voices heard—and boy did they! Thousands of residents in this community have spoken up about the impact of the proposed cuts on their daily lives, and today, the MTA has heard us, and taken action to address our concerns. I applaud the MTA and LIRR for working to ensure our community still has express train service to Penn Station even after Grand Central Madison opens this winter, but there is still more to be done to ensure our communities get the level of service we need and deserve. It’s time to get the long-derailed Port Washington Yard expansion project back on track to ensure that we can build on today’s announcement and deliver even more express train service down the road. I’m calling for the MTA and the Town

of North Hempstead to find a path forward without further delay.”

**Assemblywoman Gina L. Sillitti** said "I want to say THANK YOU to the commuters, residents, and community leaders who stepped up and made their voices heard. You helped to make these changes possible. When the draft timetables were released at the beginning of the summer, I listened to the thousands of commuters who were outraged to see the elimination of the express trains. After thousands of public comments, three packed public hearings, and hours of testimony, I am grateful that the MTA and the LIRR heard the concerns and restored express train service back to the Port Washington Line. There is still more work to be done, but I am hopeful that we will see further improvements"

Kaplan and Sillitti led an [extensive public outreach campaign to "Save our Express Trains"](#) following the MTA's release of draft timetables for LIRR service that eliminated express train service on the Port Washington Branch of the LIRR. The outreach effort engaged over 3,100 community members to fill out a survey, the results of which were shared with MTA leadership, and resulted in hundreds of residents speaking out at a series of public feedback sessions where MTA leadership heard directly from residents about their concerns. The response was so overwhelming that the MTA had to offer additional public sessions to hear from every resident who wished to speak.

While today's announcement marks a big step forward in the movement to save express train service on the north shore, further investments in infrastructure at the Port Washington Train Yard are necessary in order to further expand service capacity on the Port Washington Branch. Town of North Hempstead and MTA must find a path forward on this project, and Senator Kaplan and Assemblywoman Sillitti have offered their full support in moving ahead with this key infrastructure improvement.

“I am pleased that our service planners were able to find ways to create express service within the envelope of existing train and track capacity constraints,” said **Long Island Rail Road Interim President and Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi**. “The true key to the addition of future service increases is expanding track capacity at Port Washington Yard. The Town of North Hempstead has committed to work with Senator Kaplan and Assemblymember Sillitti to advance this long sought-after project that is the bottleneck to having more service on the branch.”

### **Morning Rush Hour: 36% Service Increase Includes Three Express Trains**

Under the revised draft timetables, express trains would depart Port Washington at 7:14 a.m., 7:54 a.m., and 8:28 a.m., stopping only at Plandome, Manhasset and Great Neck before running express to Penn Station with no intermediate stops. Compared with the first draft timetables released in June, the schedules quicken trip times by up to nine minutes from all four stations.

The revised draft timetables’ overall morning rush hour service includes 15 trains arriving in Manhattan between 6:16 a.m. and 9:51 a.m., up 36% from the current 11 that arrive at Penn Station between 6:21 a.m. and 9:34 a.m. The proposed rush hour arrivals include six trains arriving at Grand Central Madison between 6:37 a.m. and 9:20 a.m. and nine arriving at Penn Station between 6:16 a.m. and 9:51 a.m.

### **Afternoon/Evening Rush Hour: 43% Service Increase Includes Three Express Trains**

The LIRR is proposing to transform three afternoon/evening rush hour trains scheduled under earlier draft timetables to depart Penn Station at 4:16 p.m., 5:52 p.m. and 6:25 p.m. into express trains that make only a single intermediate stop at Bayside before then running

express again to Great Neck, Manhasset, Plandome and Port Washington.

Overall afternoon/evening rush hour service would include 20 trains departing Manhattan between 4:06 p.m. and 7:43 p.m., a 43% increase from the current 14 that depart Penn Station between 4:21 p.m. and 7:49 p.m. The proposed rush hour departures include 10 trains departing Grand Central Madison between 4:06 p.m. and 7:43 p.m., and 10 trains that depart Penn Station between 4:16 p.m. and 7:35 p.m.

### **Port Washington Branch Timetables Boost Overall Service 11% from Current Levels**

Despite the lack of increased space to store trains at the Port Washington Yard, the revised draft Port Washington Branch timetables include 10 more trains each weekday than current timetables, increasing service by 14% to 103 trains per day. On weekends, the timetables add five trains per day, to 81 trains each Saturday and Sunday, up 16% from the 76 that operate currently.

The LIRR's new east side terminal at Grand Central Madison is allowing the LIRR to add nearly 275 trains per weekday, increasing service 41% systemwide and saving up to 40 minutes per day for customers traveling to the east side.

The length of time LIRR trains will need to reach Grand Central – known to service planners as running time – is the same as it is to Penn Station.

The Long Island Rail Road has committed to monitor travel patterns and train capacity after opening and make adjustments as necessary.

Final schedules are expected to be released this fall.