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August 19, 2015

The Honorable Matthew J. Driscoll
Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Dear Commissioner Driscoll:

I am writing about an issue of longstanding concern to my constituents and me in Manhattan: tour bus safety.

In July, a pedestrian had to have his leg amputated after being struck by a double-decker sightseeing bus operated by Twin America LLC ("Twin America") in Greenwich Village. Last summer, two separate incidents involving Twin America tour buses in my district left over a dozen people injured. Following those incidents, I wrote to then-DOT Commissioner McDonald to request that DOT (i) make public all information the agency has collected about the crash history of bus operators, and (ii) promulgate new regulations that would expand collision reporting requirements to include incidents resulting in property damage.

I am writing to reiterate these requests, and strongly urge their speedy implementation.

According to DOT regulations, operators of double-decker sightseeing buses subject to DOT inspection are required to report any incident "which results in the loss of life or injury of any passenger, employee or other person, or which was caused by mechanical failure," within 48 hours of the incident.¹ Per the response I received from Commissioner McDonald, it is not currently agency practice to make such reports public. I feel strongly that making these reports easily and publicly accessible will provide the public – and lawmakers – with important information about the safety records of buses operating in their neighborhoods.

¹ 17 N.Y.C.R.R. § 722.1-722.2.

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Further, by expanding the mandatory reporting requirements to include incidents that result in property damage – even in the absence of mechanical failure or personal injury – both DOT and the public will have a more accurate picture of the safety records of tour bus operators.

I have attached the letter I sent Commissioner McDonald last summer, as well as the response I received, which unfortunately did not directly address my requests.

Also, congratulations on your recent appointment. I have every confidence that your strong history of public service will serve DOT well, and I look forward to working with you.

I appreciate your consideration. If there's any additional information I can provide, please do not hesitate to contact me at (212) 633-8052.

Sincerely,



Brad Hoylman
New York State Senator
27th District

Encl.