

NEW YORK  
STATE  
SENATE



SENATOR MICHAEL N. GIANARIS  
12<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT  
DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

January 31, 2020

Pat Foye  
Chair, Metropolitan Transit Authority  
2 Broadway  
New York, New York 10004

Dear Chairman Foye:

I write regarding the proposed redesign of the Queens bus network and the concerns it is generating among residents of western Queens.

By rerouting or eliminating bus lines, the proposed plan could negatively impact residents who rely on buses to go to work and school, visit friends and family, see our great cultural institutions, go shopping or receive medical care.

Specifically, these concerns include:

**1) Reduced accessibility** - This is a particular concern for riders of the Q18 and Q39 buses, which connect Astoria, Long Island City, and Ridgewood. While the proposed QT80 combines the routes, it reportedly increases the wait time and extends the distance between bus stops. In cases like this, proposed changes to routes would make it more difficult to access a bus within reasonable walking distance. In fact, some people are concerned that under the redesign plan, they would be forced to walk 30-minutes or more to the closest bus stop when currently there is one across the street from their homes.

**2) Transferring Issues** - The proposed redesigned plan appears to require transfers in order to travel between two Queens neighborhoods when it is not currently necessary and forces riders to travel significantly between transfer points instead of them being intuitively connected. This especially hurts those who rely on bus transit as a necessity and who would be adversely affected by additional walking and exposure to inclement weather including rain, wind, snow and cold such as seniors and parents with small or sick children. For example, current Ridgewood-to-Long Island City riders on the Q39 will now need to transfer from the proposed QT80 to the QT60 near a highway.



**3) Reduced Access to Cultural Institutions** - Under the proposed plan, the elimination of the Q103 would mean reduced access to a number of cultural institutions including the Noguchi Museum and Socrates Sculpture Park. This was service I worked with the MTA several years ago to increase in order to help more people visit these institutions. Currently riders could access these locations via this increased service on Vernon Boulevard, but would now have to access via a route almost three quarters of a mile away on 21<sup>st</sup> Street that might be a serious challenge for some.

Accordingly, I request the MTA amend its redesign plan with these comments in mind to improve the Queens bus system without negatively affecting the countless people who rely on it daily. Surface transportation options should be expanded, faster, more accessible, more reliable, move more people and connect to more places of interest in order to thrust Queens into the future of transportation, not do the opposite.

I look forward to a response to these concerns as well as the continued refinement of the proposed plan. I sincerely hope that it will continue to evolve to the benefit of concerned riders and that their voices will be heard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Gianaris".

Senator Michael Gianaris  
Deputy Majority Leader