



May 18 2017

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NY State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We, the undersigned members of the State Senate, have identified an effort which you can undertake at relatively low cost to quickly achieve significant results for over two million constituents: improvements to New York City's bus service.

The state of bus service in New York City is poor -- and worsening each year. Buses in New York City have average speeds of seven miles an hour, and in more congested areas like Midtown Manhattan, Downtown Brooklyn and Jamaica, Queens, they average a mere **four miles per hour**. As a result, bus riders are forced to contend with frequently-delayed, unreliable buses and long commutes. It does not have to be this way. Cities such as London and Seoul have turned around their bus systems, improving bus speeds and reliability enough to make buses competitive with other modes of travel. To address the problems slowing down NYC's bus riders, we request that you direct the MTA to immediately focus on implementing two low-cost technological improvements, **transit signal priority** and **all-door boarding technology**, that can produce a substantial improvement in bus service citywide.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) allows traffic signals to communicate with nearby buses to hold green lights for a few extra seconds as a bus approaches an intersection. In Chicago, CTA and Pace buses saw a **15% reduction** in travel times after TSP was deployed. While the NYC Department of Transportation has largely completed installing necessary hardware for TSP on street signals citywide, the MTA has failed to purchase the necessary software to operate TSP on city buses. The MTA should roll out TSP on buses system-wide before the end of 2017 to increase bus speeds.

Currently, buses spend an average of **twenty-two percent** of operating time at stops. **All-door boarding with electronic proof of payment** significantly reduces this source of delay. This approach is used in San Francisco and on New York's SBS routes, where bus stop "dwell" times have dropped 36%. As the MTA begins planning to replace the MetroCard, the agency should ensure that all-door boarding with electronic proof of payment is expanded to all city buses.

Buses connect over two million New Yorkers to jobs, education, healthcare, and all the opportunities the city has to offer. Unfortunately, unreliable service means New Yorkers who primarily rely on buses are at a real disadvantage; at the same time, they are the New Yorkers

who need good public services the most: according to MTA NYCT data, bus riders are on average older and earn lower incomes. In fact, **twenty-seven percent** of transit riders who use only buses are between **55 and 64 years of age**, with a median household income of **\$39,600**.

With the timely opening of the Second Avenue Subway, you have shown how your focus can improve the system. We ask you to continue that work by instructing the MTA to commit to **transit signal priority** and **all-door boarding with electronic proof of payment** in 2017 as low-cost technical improvements that can significantly increase bus speeds. We look forward to working with you this year to improve service for over two million daily bus riders.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

[Name]

[State Senator, ## District]