

September 9, 2016

The Honorable Polly Trottenberg
Commissioner
NYC Department of Transportation
55 Water Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10041

Re:

ac·count·a·bil·i·ty
/əˌkoun(t)əˈbilədē/

noun

the fact or condition of being accountable; responsibility.
"their lack of accountability has corroded public respect"

synonyms: responsibility, liability, answerability
"there must be accountability for the expenditure of every public cent"

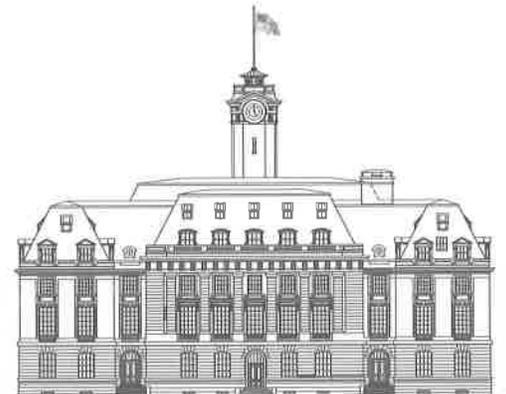
Dear Commissioner Trottenberg:

I hope this letter finds you well.

On the first day of school of any year, motorists expect heavier-than-normal traffic delays – it is inevitable and understandable. However, on the first day of 2016's school year a flurry of events conspired to create on Staten Island a traffic nightmare the likes of which we've rarely seen before.

I recognize that some of the factors contributing to these disruptions are beyond our ability to control. However, when traffic jams are exacerbated by a contractor working for the Department of Transportation, I believe action must be taken.

I am referring to the closing of a lane at the intersection of Clove Road and Narrows Road South, which is fed by commuter traffic from the eastbound Staten Island Expressway. If it were for an emergency repair at this incredibly busy intersection, we would curse our bad luck while recognizing that the work had to be done.

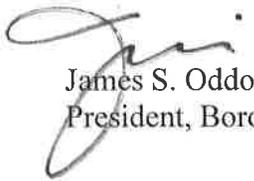


But when commuters are forced to maneuver around workers painting traffic signals, we can only shake our heads and wonder who's to blame. Please understand that I am in no way insinuating that the DOT sent a contractor to paint a signal at one of our busiest intersections during the height of rush hour on the first day of school, but clearly, someone dropped the ball.

These actions, and others like them, have caused incredible levels of discomfort and stress and an unconscionable waste of hours for tens of thousands of my constituents. I would like to know how the DOT intends to handle these mistakes going forward. For some transgressions a mere slap on the wrist will not do, and "accountability" must be the watchword of the day.

I am not interested in hurting small businesses, nor do I wish to single out the contractor responsible for Thursday's traffic mess. However, I am asking that all DOT vendors and contractors be held more accountable in the future, just as your agency is accountable to the people of New York City

Sincerely,



James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

P.S. Polly, I'm not putting these incidents at your desk. They belong there no more than they belong on mine. I just need to know that when they happen these genius contractors understand these mind-numbing moments will have real consequences. Public funds no are cones. I do. I think you do too. Thanks.