

January 21, 2016

Ms. Veronique Hakim  
President  
MTA New York City Transit  
2 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Ms. Hakim:

I hope this letter finds you well.

As you know, last Tuesday and Wednesday (January 12 and January 13), Staten Island express bus commuters faced horrendous delays as a result of accidents on the Gowanus Expressway. The accidents on the Gowanus backed traffic up on the Verrazano Bridge, onto the Staten Island Expressway, and on all approach roads, effectively crippling various sections of Staten Island for several hours during the morning rush.

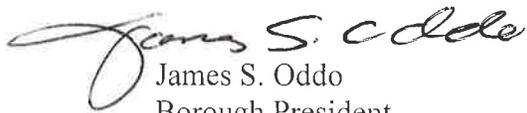
Thousands of Staten Islanders were stuck on non-moving buses, forced to explain to their employers why they would be late to work once again.

In the aftermath, I received many inquiries from commuters about the possibility of re-routing express buses that use the Verrazano Bridge over the Goethals Bridge to access Manhattan through New Jersey during such traffic events. While I understand the operational difficulties inherent in re-rerouting express buses, and that often re-routed buses might make a commute longer, I do believe that it should be considered in appropriate circumstances after considering all factors, including traffic conditions in Brooklyn and New Jersey.

For this reason, I ask MTA New York City Transit to devise a written protocol to guide this decision and share it with the riding public. I am a strong believer in transparency so that commuters fully understand why and how decisions are made. Last week none of my constituents knew how or when NYCT makes the re-routing decision, which frustrated them even more as they sat in multi-hour traffic delays.

I thank you for your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss this matter in greater detail.

Very truly yours,

  
James S. Oddo  
Borough President

cc: Thomas Prendergast, Chairman/CEO, MTA

