

March 8, 2018

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

Re: Proposed Change to Staten Island Ferry Announcements

Dear Commissioner Trottenberg:

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to propose a potential change in the disembarkation announcement that is made when a ferry is about to dock at the St. George terminal. As you know, the current announcement advises tourists that they may not remain on the ferry for a return trip to Whitehall, and that they must disembark and proceed back into the waiting room if they wish to take the next boat back to Manhattan.

While I understand the security needs that make full disembarkation a necessity, as Staten Island's north shore continues to develop at a rapid pace, the time will soon be here when tourists arriving in St. George should be encouraged, after their mandatory disembarkation, to explore the amenities Staten Island has to offer. Although the New York Wheel project has stalled, construction of Empire Outlets, New York City's first outlet mall, and Lighthouse Point – both within steps of the St. George Terminal, are projecting on-time openings. Add to these commercial hubs cultural attractions like Snug Harbor, shops, museums, restaurants and historical buildings, and it becomes clear that instructing tourists about what they must do to return immediately to Manhattan seems counter-productive.

I would like to propose a staff-level meeting to consider alternative announcements – ones that would not only fit your security needs, but our desire to make Staten Island more than just a turn-around, but rather a true destination.

I encourage you to have the appropriate member of your staff contact my Director of Tourism, Jennifer Sammartino, to discuss this matter. She can be reached at the following email address: jsammartino@stateninsula.com, or by phone at (718) 816-2134.

Thank you for your kind attention, and I look forward to cooperating with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

