

November 5, 2018

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

Re: HOV Lane Enforcement Technologies

Dear Commissioner Trottenberg:

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to suggest that the Department of Transportation undertake a study on alternative methods of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane enforcement on I278, the Staten Island and Gowanus Expressways.

As you know, one of the keys to the successful operation of our HOV 3+ lanes is vigilant enforcement. Many motorists seem to possess an unnerving willingness to take unfair and illegal advantage of the HOV lane during both the morning and evening rush, and even though thousands of summonses are issued to violators every year, the sad truth is that this has not been an effective deterrent.


The effects are far-reaching, even impacting the acceptance of the new commuter express bus routes unveiled recently by the MTA. A great deal of time, work and money has been poured into establishing these new routes in order to reduce commuting time, but the goals have been severely watered down by the traffic slowdowns caused by lane abuse.

Therefore, I and my staff have been exploring alternative methods of enforcement of High Occupancy Vehicle lanes that rely on technology rather than scarce and expensive manpower. Other municipalities have launched pilot programs to test the efficacy of systems developed by Conduent (Xerox), Siemens and Delphi. These pilot programs do not result in the issuance of summonses - or even warnings - but rather are undertaken to prove that the technology has an efficiency rate that is acceptable; that is, a rate that is consistently in the upper ninetieth percentile.

I urge you to put some of the considerable resources of your agency into researching alternative HOV enforcement technologies. Finding one would greatly increase the benefits of the HOV 3+ lane, offering those commuters that transit Staten Island and Brooklyn on I278 some small measure of relief.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,


James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

