



**THE POLICE COMMISSIONER
CITY OF NEW YORK**

February 12, 2019

Honorable James Oddo
Staten Island Borough President
10 Richmond Terrace
Staten Island, NY 10301

Dear Borough President Oddo:

I am writing in response to the correspondence you forwarded to Mayor Bill de Blasio. The letter was on behalf of your constituents who travel to and through the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel during the morning and evening rush hours. In your letter, you requested a meeting to discuss issues with the High Occupancy Vehicle 3+ (HOV3+) lane that traverses Staten Island and Brooklyn, and your suggestions to alleviate delays experienced by commuters.

First, let me assure you that the New York City Police Department is committed to ensuring the flow of vehicular traffic throughout the city. Since the completion of this dedicated lane for high occupancy vehicles, enforcement has been a priority for our department. The members assigned to our Transportation Bureau's Highway Units #2 and #5 deploy police officers and supervisors to ensure that use of this lane is aggressively monitored and enforced. In particular, our personnel give special attention to the morning and evening rush hours. This enforcement is augmented with auxiliary personnel, as appropriate. As a result of our efforts, a total of 7,521 summonses were issued last year, a 19.5% increase from the 6,290 summonses issued in 2017.

The New York City Police Department is well aware of the traffic congestion commuters may encounter traveling into and out of the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel. In Manhattan, the problem is caused by a complex pattern of traffic arriving at the tunnel entrance area. Accordingly, our traffic enforcement personnel endeavor to rectify this by balancing the traffic flows arriving from the different routes approaching the tunnel. The passengers on the express buses get a view of the traffic in the immediate vicinity of the tunnel. However, our perspective extends far beyond here, where another blockage elsewhere in the traffic grid could further delay the express buses at a different location. I cite this not to minimize your concerns, but to add perspective.

We have both supervisory and non-supervisory personnel assigned during the evening rush hour to lower Manhattan, specifically Broadway south of Vesey Street. This enables us to increase our enforcement efforts against drivers who park illegally or obstruct traffic in this same area. Moreover, in collaboration with the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, the traffic lane cones are configured to allow for a smoother transition from the Battery Park Underpass into the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel. This alleviates congestion at the entrance of the tunnel. In addition, the police department meets regularly with representatives from the New York City Department of Transportation (NYDOT) and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA)

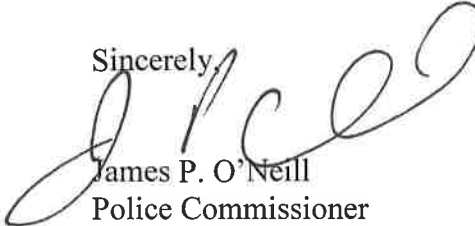
to discuss traffic flow challenges. As a result of our collaborative efforts with these agencies, express bus speeds at peak hours have recently increased by almost 30%

A member of my staff has brought your constituents' concerns to the attention of Chief Thomas Chan, commanding officer of our Transportation Bureau, Inspector Steven A. D'Ulisse, commanding officer of our Highway District and Deputy Inspector Richard P. Avignone, commanding officer of our Traffic Enforcement District. They have directed their personnel to continue to work aggressively to maintain the orderly flow of vehicular traffic and provide enforcement throughout the city, when appropriate. However, it should be noted that the assignment of traffic enforcement agents must remain flexible so that coverage is maintained not only at select locations, but also at the scenes of emergencies or other special events which may occur throughout the city. I have the utmost confidence in Chief Chan's, Inspector D'Ulisse's and Deputy Inspector Avignone's abilities to assign their personnel and resources appropriately.

I am informed that a meeting will be scheduled in the near future to address your constituents' concerns. We appreciate your dedication to the residents of New York City and look forward to working with you in the future. Collaboration between local stakeholders, particularly elected officials, and our command staff, is one of the most effective means for bringing about a lasting reduction in crime and addressing the concerns of neighborhood residents and business owners.

Thank you for your concern in this matter and for your continued support of the New York City Police Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. P. O'Neill", written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name and title.

James P. O'Neill
Police Commissioner