

EMPIRE STATE FUTURE
ENVISION VALLEY STREAM
ETHICAL HUMANIST SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND
FREEPORT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
HICKSVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
HEALTH AND WELFARE COUNCIL OF LONG ISLAND
LOCAL 338 RWDSU/UFCW
LONG ISLAND ASSOCIATION
LONG ISLAND BUS RIDERS UNION
LONG ISLAND BUSINESS COUNCIL

LONG ISLAND FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL/CIO
LONG ISLAND GREENWAYS AND HEALTHY TRAILS
LONG ISLAND JOBS WITH JUSTICE
LONG ISLAND PROGRESSIVE COALITION
LONG ISLAND YOUTH OF ETHICAL SOCIETIES
SUSTAINABLE LONG ISLAND
THE NEW YORK PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP
VISION LONG ISLAND
TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION, LOCAL 252
TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN

August 5, 2013

Honorable Edward Mangano
Office of the County Executive
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, NY 11501

Re: Increasing Funding for NICE

Dear County Executive Mangano,

As you begin considering Nassau County's Draft Fiscal Year 2014 budget, our organizations urge you to increase Nassau County's contribution to the Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE) bus system.

In April 2012, NICE enacted service cuts as a measure to save roughly \$7.5 million. Since those cuts were made, NICE has dramatically and consistently lost customers. By the end of 2012, NICE ridership had fallen by nearly 4 percent over 2011. In fact, 2012 ridership was the lowest in 14 years; dipping below the 30 million annual ridership mark for the first time since 1998. Unfortunately, ridership in 2013 continues to fall. According to data from the National Transit Database, ridership through May 2013 has decreased by 5.5 percent over the same time period in 2012.

Thanks to the efforts of NICE bus riders and advocates, NICE received an additional \$5 million in State Transit Operating Assistance in New York State's 2014 budget. This funding, coupled with \$3 million in revenue generated from a NICE fare hike in March 2013, will help NICE restore some of the service cuts made last year and increase service on some routes starting in September.

But in order for NICE to fully recover its lost ridership, more funding is needed. State taxpayers and bus riders have done their part. Nassau County must now do more by increasing its contribution to the NICE bus system.

Without additional County support, the County's bus service could end up seeing even further drops in ridership, which in turn could lead to higher fares or service cuts. We urge you to increase Nassau County's contribution to NICE bus in the 2014 budget. To discuss this issue further, please contact Ryan Lynch, rlynch@tstc.org.

Sincerely,

<p>Eric Alexander Executive Director Vision Long Island</p>	<p>Richard Bivone and Robert Fonti Nassau and Suffolk County Chairmen Long Island Business Council</p>
<p>Patricia Bowden President Transport Workers Union, Local 252</p>	<p>Roger Clayman Executive Director Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL/CIO</p>
<p>Lionel Chitty President Hicksville Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Matthew Cohen Vice President, Government Affairs Long Island Association</p>
<p>Calvin Dame Humanist Religion Director Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island</p>	<p>John Durso President Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW</p>
<p>Amy Engel Executive Director Sustainable Long Island</p>	<p>Peter Fleischer Executive Director Empire State Future</p>
<p>Lois Howes 1st Vice President Freeport Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>Tara Klein Advisor Long Island Youth of Ethical Societies</p>
<p>Charlene Obernauer Executive Director Long Island Jobs With Justice</p>	<p>Gwen O'Shea President/CEO Health and Welfare Council of Long Island</p>
<p>Jason Chin-Fatt Field Organizer The New York Public Interest Research Group</p>	<p>David Sabatino President Envision Valley Stream</p>
<p>Stephanie Sapiie Organizer/Member Long Island Bus Riders Union</p>	<p>Lisa Tyson Executive Director Long Island Progressive Coalition</p>
<p>Veronica Vanterpool Executive Director Tri-State Transportation Campaign</p>	<p>Michael Vitti President Long Island Greenways and Healthy Trails</p>