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LONG ISLAND BUS RIDERS' UNION
LONG ISLAND FEDERATION OF LABOR, AFL/CIO
LONG ISLAND GREENWAYS AND HEALTHY TRAILS
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THE HAMPTONS VISITORS COUNCIL
TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION, LOCAL 252
TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN
VISION LONG ISLAND

September 26, 2012

Honorable Kenneth P. Lavallo
28 North Country Road, Suite 203
Mount Sinai, NY 11766

Re: New York State Budget and Suffolk County Transit

Dear Senator Lavallo,

Our groups write to urge you to find new state funding to support expanded Suffolk County Transit service to Sundays. Despite the fiscal uncertainties facing Suffolk County, the County continues to dedicate a consistent level of funding to support its bus service but additional state support would allow Suffolk County to expand Sunday service beyond its initial successful pilot program.

Recent Newsday reports have found that the two Suffolk County Transit lines that provide Sunday service from Memorial Day to Labor Day continue to grow in popularity. Sunday ridership grew by nearly 2% when compared with the same number of service days in 2011 and an additional 2,813 riders took advantage of new summer service. This increase in ridership took place despite a 25 cent fare increase that went into effect immediately before the 2012 summer service began. In a recent editorial, Newsday noted the ridership increase was evidence that Suffolk County needs a seven day a week bus transit system.

Thanks to your efforts, the 2012 New York State budget included an additional \$1.5 million in State Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA), via a redistribution of the Long Lines and Transmission Tax, for Suffolk County. We had hoped that this additional subsidy, in tandem with the \$1 million generated through the May fare increases, could have offered Suffolk County an opportunity to expand bus service

to seven days a week on the majority of its routes. However, because this redistribution is only guaranteed for one year, Suffolk County could not plan for a more robust expansion of transit service. We hope you will support the permanent redistribution of this tax in the New York State 2013 budget, and identify additional state support for Suffolk County's bus system. This is important because, currently, Suffolk County receives less state support (approximately 31% of Suffolk County Transit's total 2011 budget) than neighboring Nassau County (47% of Nassau Inter-County Express' total 2012 budget).

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to meeting with you to discuss this opportunity further. Please feel free to contact Ryan Lynch at 631.742.7528 or rlynch@tstc.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Eric Alexander
Executive Director
Vision Long Island

Roger Clayman
Executive Director
Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL/CIO

Bryan DeLuca
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East End Tourism Alliance

Amy Engle
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Five Town Rural Transit

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Chris Jones
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Paul Monte
CEO
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East Hampton Chamber of Commerce

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Long Island Greenways and Healthy Trails (LIGHT)

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