



LIRRCC

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD
COMMUTER COUNCIL

2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 mail@pcac.org

mark j. epstein chair
larry rubinstein vice chair
nassau county owen costello • michael
godino
raymond pagano • bryan peranzo
larry rubinstein
suffolk county gerard p. bringmann
sheila carpenter • mark j. epstein
maureen michaels
queens county ira greenberg
kings county matthew l. kessler

william a. henderson executive director
ellyn shannon associate director
angela bellisio transportation planner
bradley brashears transportation planner
karyl berger caferio research associate
deborah morrison administrative assistant

**Remarks of LIRRCC Chair Mark Epstein
before the MTA Board LIRR Committee
Scoping Document on LIRR Expansion Project
May 23, 2016**

I'm Bill Henderson, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA and I'm here to deliver the following statement on behalf of Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council Mark Epstein.

Over the next two days the Long Island Rail Road will be holding six scoping meetings on Long Island to address proposals for the Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project. These proposals are aimed at adding a third track to the Main Line of the Long Island Rail Road, which has been an objective of both the LIRR and tens of thousands of long-suffering commuters for many years. The proposed work also has the added benefit of eliminating seven at-grade crossings between Floral Park and Hicksville, improving traffic flow on area streets and roads and removing from our communities the very real risk of tragic collisions between trains and motor vehicles.

The need for this improvement is clear from both the limitations that the LIRR faces in normal operations and the huge delays that result when any problem on the tracks disrupts service between Floral Park and Hicksville. An issue such as a stalled train, malfunctioning crossing gate, or track defect means major delays not only for Main Line riders, but for the entire system, as Main Line delays cascade across the LIRR.

In addition, the MTA will expend a total of over \$10.6 billion to complete and furnish rolling stock for the East Side Access project, but the Rail Road and its riders cannot realize the full benefits of this project without eliminating bottlenecks on the Main Line. It is inconceivable that we would spend this amount of money on East Side Access and leave major potential benefits on the table.

We know that this Board understands the problems that the LIRR has with Main Line capacity, operational flexibility and redundancy. We know that you want a modern LIRR where riders can travel in both directions even during rush hours. We know that you want a system that truly supports the economic well-being of Long Island, rather than just meeting a minimum requirement for service. Riders need the members of the MTA Board to be thoughtful and steadfast advocates for the expansion of the Main Line to three tracks. We'll be at the forefront of those calling for this critical work to move forward and we hope that you will be there with us.



LIRRCC

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD
COMMUTER COUNCIL

2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 mail@pcac.org

mark j. epstein chair
larry rubinstein vice chair
nassau county owen costello • michael
godino
raymond pagano • bryan peranzo
larry rubinstein
suffolk county gerard p. bringmann
sheila carpenter • mark j. epstein
maureen michaels
queens county ira greenberg
kings county matthew l. kessler

william a. henderson executive director
ellyn shannon associate director
angela bellisio transportation planner
bradley brashears transportation planner
karyl berger caferio research associate
deborah morrison administrative assistant