



October 1, 2019

Andy Byford,
President, New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10018

Dear President Byford,

We write to follow up on a previous letter Senator Gounardes sent you in June, as well as conversations you've had with him during the 95th Street R train and Sheepshead Bay Road Q train Group Station Manager visits, regarding the evening service slow downs along the R line. As morning commutes begin to improve, my office is inundated with complaints from riders who have faced nightmarish evening commutes returning home. Rides that should ordinarily take 45 minutes to 60 minutes now routinely taking longer than an hour, in some cases up to an hour and a half.

These delays are due in part to construction trains leaving the 36th Street rail yard in the midst of the evening rush hour. This causes significant delays as passenger-filled trains are left waiting while construction trains make their way to wherever they are working that night. Compounding the frustration that riders feel from these delays is the fact that many times their trains are delayed without any service announcements explaining why. As you well know, the lack of communication is a big reason for rider frustrations, and while improvements have been made systemwide, they appear to be inconsistent.

It is understandable that considerable work must be done to our transit system to improve its infrastructure, but this work should not disrupt riders more than it already does. Brooklyn R train riders already bear a difficult burden of riding one of the longest and slowest lines across the system. This problem will only continue to get worse as the MTA accelerates its plans to modernize the signaling network, which as you've previously pointed out, will require extensive work during evenings and weekends. We note the irony that none of the planned signal upgrades *for the next decade* include any branch of the R line in Brooklyn. Surely we can find some small measure of relief to help make the evening commute a little better for our customers and constituents, and find a better way to move the construction trains without causing delays.

As always, thank you for your leadership in helping turn around a broken transit system. Now I urge you to help give my constituents a bit of relief from what is increasingly becoming an untenable commuting nightmare.

Sincerely,

Andrew S. Gounardes
Member of Senate

Mathylde Frontus
Member of Assembly

Justin Brannan
City Councilmember

cc: P. Foye, CEO, Metropolitan Transit Authority