



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR  
Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins, Village of Westbury Get Commitment on Ellison Avenue Bridge

JACK M. MARTINS April 26, 2011

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Village of Westbury Mayor Peter Cavallaro, State Senator Jack M. Martins, the chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Local Government, and State Senator Charles Fuschillo, the chair of the Senate Standing Committee on Transportation, met yesterday with Long Island Railroad President Helena Williams and representatives from the New York State Department of Transportation to address the Ellison Avenue Bridge in Westbury, which is badly in need of renovation and rehabilitation.

Ellison Avenue acts as a major north/south route for traffic. The bridge is a raised roadway that runs over the LIRR tracks. Traffic flow over the bridge is substantial since Ellison Avenue leads to and from both the LIE and Jericho Turnpike, as well as to and from certain major commercial and governmental locations in Mineola and Garden City.

In August 2007, Newsday cited the Ellison Avenue Bridge as one of the five worst bridges on Long Island. Both Mayor Cavallaro and Senator Martins believe the replacement of the bridge is long overdue.

The meeting, which was held at Westbury Village Hall, was an opportunity to bring the Village of Westbury and LIRR together to begin the process for a definitive solution to replace the bridge. Since the LIRR is responsible for the maintenance of the bridge framework, the responsibility for the replacement of the structure lies with the LIRR.

The LIRR did commit to move the process forward by beginning the preliminary design phase of the replacement of the bridge. That process should take approximately a year. The cost of the replacement of the bridge is estimated to be \$31.6 million.

"I was disappointed that we didn't get a firm commitment at this time to completely rebuild the bridge. However, the LIRR did commit to beginning the process with the preliminary design phase of a new bridge. Hopefully, during the design phase, the railroad will deal with their budgetary issues and the shortfall in their capital budget so that when the design phase is complete, the funding will be available to replace the bridge," said Senator Martins. "The Village of Westbury deserves to have this bridge replaced. Working with Mayor Cavallaro, we will make sure that the replacement of this bridge remains a top priority for the railroad. This project cannot be put off any longer. We will hold the LIRR to their commitment and make certain that it is a priority."

Mayor Cavallaro thanked Senator Martins for his intervention and stated, "Senator Martins understands the importance of assuring the safety of both the motorists who travel over the bridge, as well as the many railroad commuters who pass under the bridge on a daily basis. I am grateful to Senator Martins for his commitment to Westbury's residents; I and the village stand ready to work with Senator Martins to make sure that a solution to this long-standing problem becomes a reality."