



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

Alessi and LaValle announce restoration of MTA service to Greenport

KENNETH P. LAVALLE March 19, 2010

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This afternoon, Assemblyman Marc Alessi (D-Shoreham) and state Senator Ken LaValle (R-Port

Jefferson) announced the essential restoration of LIRR (Long Island Railroad) service to the East End.

The MTA had threatened to completely cut daily service between Ronkonkoma and Greenport and

reduce weekend service from four to two eastbound and westbound trips a day, only on summer

weekends.

Alessi and LaValle led a coalition of elected officials and residents to oppose these cuts and vocalize the East End's fight, which has been referred to as "Against Taxation Without Transportation."

Suffolk County pays \$97 million for the MTA payroll tax, in addition to the \$250 million the county

already provides the MTA through mortgage, utility and retail sales taxes every year. The proposed

elimination of services was a slap in the face to North Fork residents, argued the legislators.

"This is a small victory and I will continue to fight to expand local service," Assemblyman

Alessi said. "We are ready to work with the MTA to make public transportation more user-friendly and

cohesive in the Peconic Bay region. Although it is a step in the right direction, in the end we need to do

what is right for the East End, and if that means secede, that's what we should do."

The legislators are calling for an East End meeting with the MTA to discuss how to increase ridership, but stress the larger issue is the level of service received by the area compared to how much it

pays into the MTA. This is the first step of what will be a long process to address this issue and the

area's traffic concerns, said the legislators.

"We fought against the MTA's proposed service cuts from Ronkonkoma to Greenport and won,"

Senator LaValle said. "The MTA demonstrated poor judgment and a lack of consideration for the people

traveling from the East End. I am pleased that they have come to realize that they must show greater respect

to eastern Long Island. It is my hope that the Authority, which was formed in the 1950s, has plans to step up

to the plate and create ways to meet the needs of suburban communities in the 21st century."