



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Senator Serrano Takes a Stand for East Side Commuters

JOSÉ M. SERRANO November 10, 2010

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION**



Senator Serrano Joins Cyclists and Pedestrians to Call on City to Fulfill East Side Safety Pledge

Senator José M. Serrano today joined Transportation Alternatives to deliver a stack of 2,500 handwritten letters from cyclists and pedestrians to Mayor Michael Bloomberg, asking that the city follow through on its plans for pedestrian islands and protected bike lanes on Manhattan's First and Second Avenues.

"The bike lanes that have been implemented are a great start, and will likely improve the commute for East Side residents, from the Lower East Side all the way north to my district in East Harlem," said Senator Serrano. "However, I must emphasize the importance of ensuring that the design be completed in full throughout the corridor, and that no community be excluded from the benefits of this plan- particularly the safety improvements that have been implemented from Houston to 34th Street."

The redesign of First and Second Avenues features bus-only lanes to speed riders between Houston and 125th Streets on the new M15 Select Bus Service. As recently as this past winter, the plans called for pedestrian islands and protected bike lanes along the length of the corridor. However, in June the city announced that the bike lanes and pedestrian islands would start at Houston Street, as proposed, but stop at 34th Street, leaving a four-and-a-half mile void through Midtown, the Upper East Side and East Harlem.

East Harlem has one of the city's highest rates of bike commuting but no bike lanes connecting to business districts in Midtown or Lower Manhattan. Completing the promised safety improvements on First and Second avenues would encourage more people to walk, bike, shop and enjoy the neighborhood.

"As cycling becomes more popular among city dwellers, the deficiency of cycling infrastructure needs to be addressed," said Serrano. "We must act now to make streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians, not only in downtown Manhattan, but uniformly, throughout the city."

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