



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Elaine Phillips

Senator Phillips: MTA Must Take Action to Protect LIRR Riders During Penn Station Overhaul

ELAINE PHILLIPS May 5, 2017

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After calling for fare reductions for LIRR commuters who will be impacted by Amtrak's summer-long infrastructure repairs at Penn Station, Senator Elaine Phillips (R-Manhasset) has sent a letter urging MTA leadership to take additional steps to minimize service disruptions for its riders. The project is expected to significantly impact service at the country's busiest rail terminal, especially during the summer months where several tracks are expected to be closed.

"The MTA has an obligation to its customers to do everything it can to minimize headaches for hundreds of thousands of daily LIRR commuters during this major reconstruction project. Rehabilitating Penn Station's infrastructure is absolutely necessary to improve safety and reliability, but it cannot be allowed to result in an even worse debacle than the one LIRR commuters having been dealing with," said Senator Phillips.

In her letter, Senator Phillips detailed five key issues that must be addressed to help protect Long Island commuters:

- Reducing fares for the over 300,000 daily LIRR riders who will be impacted by service disruptions at Penn Station during the construction.

- Ensuring that Amtrak prioritizes the needs of the LIRR, which serves nearly half of Penn Station's total daily users, including shifting some Amtrak trains to Grand Central Station so that more tracks are available to serve commuters.
- Establishing key performance measures for Amtrak and its contractors to ensure that work is completed on-time and with minimal disruption to commuters;
- Holding continuing public hearings throughout the course of the project to gain feedback and ideas; and
- Planning for alternate ways for commuters to reach the city without using Penn, including increasing trains to other terminals in Brooklyn and Long Island City, and providing expanded subway, bus and ferry service from key points to Manhattan.

“Commuters should not have to keep enduring the nightmare they’ve been suffering through at Penn Station. The MTA needs to take every possible step to ensure they are protected,” Senator Phillips added.

A copy of the letter can be viewed [here](#).