



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

# **Mayor de Blasio, DOT Commissioner Appoint Senator Gianaris, Former Speaker Mark-Viverito to MTA Sustainability Advisory Working Group**

[Michael Gianaris](#)

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ISSUE:

- [MTA](#)
- [Fix Our Subways](#)
- [Subways](#)
- [New York City Transit](#)



**NEW YORK**—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Department of Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg appointed former Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and State Senator Michael Gianaris to the Metropolitan Transportation Sustainability Advisory Workgroup. The two appointees have extensive experience working on behalf of New Yorkers to improve New York City's transit system. The workgroup was established in the enacted 2018-19 New York State budget. The 10-member workgroup will study the regional public transit system and recommend ways in which the system can be improved to provide safe, adequate, efficient and reliable transportation for New Yorkers.

"Former Speaker Mark-Viverito and State Senator Gianaris have a proven track record advocating on behalf of New Yorkers for a fair and reliable transportation system," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "I'm confident that their valuable insights – informed by their many years of public service – will help the workgroup conduct a thorough analysis of our transit system's ailments and potential solutions."

"Mass transit in New York City faces enormous challenges, and former Speaker Mark-Viverito and State Senator Gianaris both have the kind of experience and expertise to ably represent the City on this workgroup," said **NYC DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg**. "I look forward to supporting them as they study the MTA – and give the City substantial opportunity to make positive changes for the City and the entire region's transportation future."

"I am honored to join the Metropolitan Transportation Sustainability Advisory Workgroup which will examine ways to make the critical upgrades needed to provide the kind of safe and reliable transit service that New Yorkers need and deserve," said **former Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "I look forward to working with my colleagues on the Workgroup to carefully study the challenges facing our transit system and ensure that we bring our subways and buses into the 21st Century."

"New York deserves a world-class transit system that is reliable, affordable and 100 percent accessible – right now, we have none of these," said **State Senator Michael Gianaris**. "There is much work to do to get our mass transit where it needs to be, and I am honored to be trusted with the responsibility to help make that happen."

### **About Former Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito:**

Melissa Mark-Viverito is Vice President for Strategic Engagement at the Latino Victory Fund (LVF). Mark-Viverito previously served as Speaker of the New York City Council, the first Puerto Rican and Latina to hold citywide office, and represented the 8th District, which includes El Barrio/East Harlem and the South Bronx. Born and raised in Puerto Rico, she worked for over a decade in local activism, nonprofit organizations and grassroots labor organizing before being elected to the City Council in 2005. As Speaker, she focused on transparency in government and policies that generate socioeconomic opportunity and combat systemic inequality, including groundbreaking work on immigration and criminal justice reform.

Under her leadership, the Council supported increasing access to transportation for all New Yorkers, including Select Bus Service, the city's ferries and protected bike lanes. She has been a longtime and consistent advocate for the creation of a dedicated revenue stream for critical transit upgrades. In her district, she was also a strong advocate for improved public transit options, such as Phase II of the Second Avenue Subway, which will extend the Q line into El Barrio/East Harlem, and the Select Bus Service line on 125th Street.

### **About State Senator Michael Gianaris:**

State Senator Michael Gianaris is the Chair of the Senate Democratic Conference and a leading voice for better transit policy in New York, authoring the Millionaire's

Tax legislation to create a dedicated revenue stream for the MTA. He has played an active role providing oversight of the MTA and calling for needed reforms. Most recently, he wrote a major report highlighting the transit system's dubious distinction of being the least accessible in the nation.

State Senator Gianaris has also been a leader in efforts to reform the criminal justice system, authoring legislation to eliminate cash bail in New York. The son of Greek immigrants, he staunchly defended New York's immigrant communities during recent policy attacks from the federal government. State Senator Gianaris is a graduate of New York City public schools, Fordham University and Harvard Law School

### **About the Metropolitan Transportation Sustainability Advisory Workgroup:**

The Metropolitan Transportation Sustainability Advisory Workgroup will review the regional transportation network within the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District, including subways and buses, the Metro-North commuter railroad, the Long Island Rail Road, etc. The workgroup will study issues related to the sustainability of the network such as funding, motor vehicle traffic, congestion, fares and for-hire vehicle services, among other things. The workgroup will issue a report with recommendations by end of year. The workgroup will consist of 10 members – two appointed by the City of New York, including the NYC DOT; four by the State, including NYS DOT and the MTA; two by the state Senate, and two by the state Assembly. The Governor will appoint the chair of the workgroup.