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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

STEVE ISRAEL

Third District, New York

February 19, 2014

Thomas F. Prendergast
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Chairman Prendergast:

As Members of Congress who represent constituents who rely on the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) to commute to and from work every day, we are writing to express our concern regarding the current labor dispute between the MTA and LIRR employee labor unions. We encourage the MTA to reconsider its decision to entirely reject the recommendations from Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) 244 or call for a second Presidential Emergency Board in order to avoid a work stoppage.

While we are cognizant of the past financial stresses of the MTA and LIRR, we hope the MTA and labor groups can come together on an agreement that everyone deems acceptable. The recommendations issued by PEB 244 may not have included everything that either side had hoped; however, we believe that it could serve as a model for the types of concessions that can be made to move an agreement forward.

If no consensus can be reached using the findings from PEB 244, we respectfully request the MTA call for another Presidential Emergency Board as a means to try and bring all parties closer to an agreement in order to avoid a work stoppage. Both transportation providers and labor groups have long relied on Presidential Emergency Boards to help break the logjams that occur during contract disputes. We believe the proceedings associated with another Presidential Emergency Board would be valuable to moving the current dispute towards a resolution.

In particular, we urge the MTA to reconsider its insistence on a wage freeze or concessions to fully pay for wage increases. According to findings from PEB 244, “[...] it simply cannot be concluded that the MTA's current financial position is one in which it is unable to pay for wage adjustments [...]” Though wage adjustments should be left to the parties to decide, we believe that the MTA should find a way to address PEB 244's findings without increasing the cost of commuting for millions of New York families.

Any disruption in LIRR service would severely impact many of our constituents, causing them to seek alternative methods of transportation that may be more time consuming, inconvenient, and

costly. Our constituents who use the LIRR to commute to work or otherwise rely on this rail service are eager for the MTA and the unions to bring this situation to a close, and it is our hope that additional actions taken by the MTA can lead to a resolution.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



STEVE ISRAEL
Member of Congress



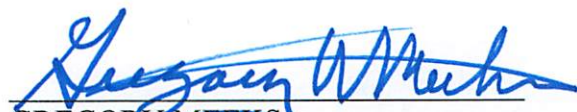
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GREGORY MEEKS
Member of Congress



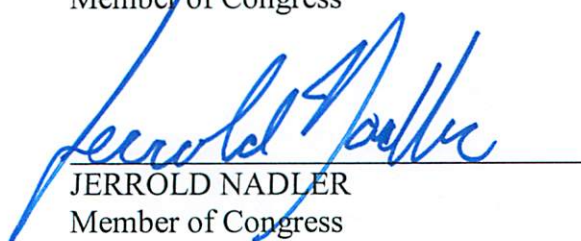
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YVETTE CLARKE
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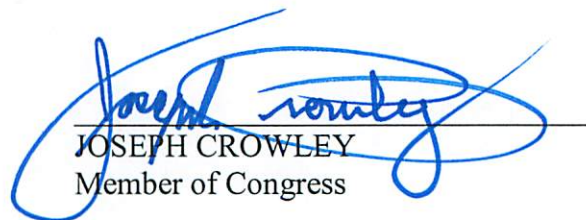
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