

The Public Ought To Know

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By Corey Bearak

MTA needs to step up and defend its bus operators

A news report yesterday (Monday, July 6, 2015) supported MTA bus operators and their unions who criticize the continued mis-application of the City's vision zero law. According the New York Post a MTA report demonstrates no fault on the part of a driver with 25 years experience as a bus operator who was recently involved in an accident. The report faulted street lighting and noted the NYPD determined the bus traveled slowly – between 11 and 15 miles per hour. The vision zero law makes it a misdemeanor for a driver to “make contact” with a pedestrian or cyclist who has the right of way.

In my February 24 **commentary** in this space, I noted the law as drafted excluded application to MTA bus operators but City Hall, its DOT and NYPD determined otherwise. That misinterpretation spawned efforts to clarify the law's intent, including legislation by Council Member I. Daneek Miller. As a former bus operator, Miller **understands** the need to protect operators who follow their training and safely maneuver buses from the application of a law intended to sanction unsafe conduct. One-half of the City Council sponsors Miller's **Int. No. 663**.

It appears the MTA now realizes how allowing the law to stand not only subjects its drivers who follow its rules and training to unnecessary sanction but opens the public transit agency to automatic liability in civil lawsuits that may follow these incidents. The application and interpretation of the vision zero law to MTA bus operators could essentially deprive the agency of resources it needs to service the public in the first place.

***Corey Bearak can be reached at StrategicPublicPolicy.com. Find his ebook, *The Public Ought To Know*, at Kindle, Nook and Apple iBooks.**

