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**ATU Local 1056 Makes Case to Make Queens Bus Service Whole**  
Testimony to the New York City Council Committee on Transportation  
June 19, 2012

by I. Daneek Miller, President/ Business Agent, ATU Local 1056

On behalf of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1056, thank you Chairman Vacca, members of the committees and other concerned Council Members present. I am ATU 1056 President and Business Agent I. Daneek Miller. My members and I appreciate this opportunity to outline the need to restore bus service outside Manhattan, where the City Department of Transportation focused on a number of initiatives in Midtown and along the East Side in particular. Our members – bus operators and mechanics – work for MTA New York City Transit's Queens bus division; we serve the riding public.

Since the misguided and hurtful cuts to bus service in affecting any communities outside Manhattan, ATU Local 1056 has organized news conferences, rallies and other events with electeds and community leaders to urge the MTA to reverse harmful cuts and enlist Mayor Bloomberg in an effort where he remains largely silent. As many must recall, the mayor proposed private vans instead of the public bus service, and we all know how that went down; that dumb plan – another attempt at privatization – provided the Jay Walder-led MTA with some cover to refrain from looking at bus service restorations.

We all know what happened: The MTA has refused to use the almost \$100 million Federal stimulus funds (our tax dollars) it had available then to prevent cuts in service.

What happened under then MTA chairman/CEO Jay Walder involved an outright refusal to exercise other options that would avert those cuts. Instead, Walder chose to balance the MTA's books on the backs of working people who depend on these bus lines each day. The issue should not involve dollars; it should be policy policy. For many Queens residents, buses provide the ONLY transit option; that means many face longer walks to bus stops along other routes and longer rides.



*Representing all hourly rated Employees of  
the Queens Division, Who safely Operate  
and Maintain Buses for MTA New York  
City Transit.*

*Serving the communities of Queens,  
Manhattan, and the Bronx since  
January 23rd, 1935.*

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The public needs to know that MTA chair Walder, once of Queens but late of London and now chasing big bucks in Hong King, had testified to the NYS Assembly that he would NOT (emphasis added) apply new funding or saved resources to restore service cuts and eliminations. This outrage ought to be fixed. Legislators support the restorations. It remains a question of priorities. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand sponsor legislation to direct federal operating aid, previously denied NYC transit, to the MTA. The City Council identified in 2010 \$90 million in unused federal stimulus monies and some \$50 million in funds currently allocated to pay-as-you-go capital to avert the cuts. No doubt, we can find the dollars. Needed. The spread sheet attached to this testimony outlines the cuts in Queens barely totaling \$8 million.

We cannot let these harmful cuts stand.

We need to look at the entire MTA , expose and end any wasteful policies and practices and rethink a pre-disposition to costly megaprojects that benefit connected developers and insiders. Local 1056 continues to speak out and urge our legislative and community allies to fight the cuts and identify funding to resources the service restoration we need.

We need to think about how to use buses help sustain the economy. One example: they MTA killed off the Q79 along Little Neck Parkway, rather than extend the line to the LIRR main line. Doing so would provide many who rely on autos a sustainable alternative, especially when you look at the uses along that corridor, including the Farm museum which attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors.

The Center for Urban Future report also highlighted the need to enhance commutes from and to Brooklyn and Queens and Queens and The Bronx. Bus service enhancements can be delivered much sooner than rail or subway projects.

The bottom line is public transportation cannot be viewed as just a private sector, market driven service. It provides the economic and social hub of our society and the lifeline of all our citizens, and no reasonable person or entity can support these harmful service cuts. Service cuts and unsafe private vans ill-serve the public. ATU Local 1056 will continue to rally, lobby and organize against the service cuts.

Thank you.

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[See Queens Bus Cuts Spreadsheet on next page]

## Queens Bus Cuts Spreadsheet

Route	Proposal	Description	cost	Affects
X32 Express	Eliminate	Operates between Queens & Flushing	\$300,000	Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Flushing, Fresh Meadows, Jamaica, Jamaica Estates, Utopia, Whitestone
X51 Express	Eliminate	Operates between Queens & Midtown Manhattan	\$800,000	Flushing
QM22 (MTA Bus)	Eliminate	express bus service between Jackson Heights and Midtown Manhattan (operates on weekday peak periods only)	\$143,000	Jackson Heights, Astoria, and Long Island City
QM23 (MTA Bus)	Eliminate	express bus service between Brooklyn Manor, Queens and Penn Station (operates on weekday peak periods only)	\$101,000	Brooklyn Manor, Queens
Q89 (MTA Bus)	Eliminate	local bus service (currently operates on weekdays only). discontinuation of the Q24 west of Broadway Junction station (listed under Brooklyn)	\$120,000	Jamaica, South Jamaica, South Ozone Park
Q24	Eliminate	eliminate service, partial reroute of Q15 (costs \$50k)	\$700,000	Jamaica, Richmond Hill, East New York, Bushwick.
Q14	Eliminate	cover part of eliminated Q14)	\$1,350,000	Flushing, Whitestone
Q15	partial reroute		see above	Flushing, Whitestone
Q26	Reduction	Discontinue Off-Peak	\$500,000	Flushing, Auburndale, Fresh Meadows.
Q31	Eliminate	Discontinue weekend service Discontinue all service (operates weekdays only; partial restoration @ \$800k).	\$400,000	Jamaica, Utopia, Auburndale, Bayside.
Q42	Eliminate	Discontinue all service (operates weekdays only).	\$200,000	Jamaica, Addesleigh Park.
Q74	Eliminate	Discontinue all service (operates weekdays only)	\$1,200,000	Kew Gardens, Kew Gardens Hills, Queens College
Q75	Eliminate	Discontinue Saturday service (does not operate Sundays).	\$1,100,000	Jamaica, Jamaica Estates, Fresh Meadows, Oakland Gardens
Q76	Eliminate	Discontinue (operates weekdays & Saturdays only).	\$300,000	Jamaica, Jamaica Estates, Fresh Meadows, Bayside, Whitestone, College Point
Q79	Eliminate	Discontinue overnight service (run 5:00 am - 1:00 am)	\$700,000	Little Neck, Glen Oaks, Bellerose, Floral Park
Q30	Reduce Service	Cut Sunday 5:00 am - 1:15 am service to end 12:00 am	\$100,000	Jamaica, Jamaica Estates, Fresh Meadows, Oakland Gardens, Douglaston, Little Neck
Q48	Reduce Service		[included above]	Jackson Heights, East Elmhurst, Corona, Flushing
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$8,014,000</b>	

Source: MTA