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October 18, 2018

Mr. Darryl C. Irick
Sr. Vice President, Buses
New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

RE: Ultra-Low-Carbon “Biomethane” Fuel for New York City Buses

We the undersigned, as members of the City Council whose districts include bus depots housing compressed natural gas (CNG) fueled buses, strongly encourage MTA/NYCT to take two steps related to these buses that would greatly benefit the health of local residents and depot workers, and significantly reduce the buses’ greenhouse gas emissions: (1) pilot the use of biomethane fuel (also called “renewable natural gas” or “RNG”), and (2) upgrade the existing CNG bus fleet to “Near Zero” emission engines.

With about 5,800 buses in NYC, the MTA operates the largest surface transit fleet in the country. Fortunately, approximately 800 of these buses already run on CNG, which reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 20% compared to diesel buses, as well as cutting street level pollutants like nitrogen oxides (“NO_x”) and fine particulate matter (“PM”) by approximately 27% and 23% respectively, according to Argonne National Laboratory. These buses play an important role in helping to reduce GHG emissions and improve air quality in New York City.

Through recent discussions with NYC-based environmental research non-profit **Energy Vision**, we’ve learned that the CNG fleet could be even cleaner. Biomethane /renewable natural gas, made entirely from the biogases emitted by decomposing organic wastes, can now be used as a substitute for conventional CNG in any of these 800 buses, with no alteration to the vehicle or the dispensing equipment. While chemically similar to geologic CNG, it has much lower GHG emissions: its use in

vehicles achieves GHG reductions of 50% or more according to the California Air Resources Board, and at no additional cost.

Furthermore, when RNG is combined with “Near-Zero” natural gas engines, emissions of health-threatening nitrogen oxides (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) are reduced to 90% below the most stringent EPA requirements. This represents a major benefit for the health of people living near bus depots, as well as drivers and depot workers.

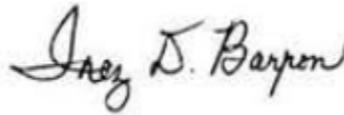
RNG is available on the market right now, including from MTA’s current CNG fueling station operator, at a price competitive with conventional natural gas. “Near Zero” engines are also commercially available, at an incremental cost of just \$15,000 more than a standard CNG engine – or \$12 million to upgrade the existing CNG fleet to near-zero emission technology.

The change in procurement practices for fuel, and a marginal expense for buses could immediately reduce GHGs by 50% or more and greatly improve the air quality in our neighborhoods. Therefore, we encourage the MTA/NYCT to pursue the use of the renewable natural gas / Near Zero engine combination in New York City’s existing CNG fleet. Los Angeles, Santa Monica and Grand Junction Colorado have taken these steps. If they can take them, certainly so can New York, maintaining the MTA’s important sustainability leadership.

Sincerely,



Carlos Menchaca, 38th District
Jackie Gleason Depot



Inez Barron, 42nd District
Spring Creek Depot



Raphael Salamanca, 17th District
West Farms Depot



Paul Vallone, 19th District
College Point Depot

*CC: Mr. Andy Byford, President, NYCT
Ms. Sarah Meyer, Sr. VP, NYCT
Ydanis Rodriguez, NYC Council*