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March 18, 2014

The Honorable Bill de Blasio
Mayor
The City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

Bill

I write to support the establishment of ferry services between Soundview/Clason Point and various ports along Manhattan's east side. I join with City Council Members Annabel Palma and James Vacca, as well as the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, in acknowledging the significant benefits ferry service between the Bronx and Manhattan would yield for not just my borough, but our entire city's economy and our shared environment. I therefore ask that you endorse a three-year ferry service test-pilot for Soundview/Clason Point.

Ferry service now in place between Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan has been an unqualified success. Such success can be attributed to the overall reliability of such service and the time savings realized when compared to automobile travel. As I stated in my recent "State of the Borough" address, ferry service in Soundview would decrease congestion on our streets while also offering thousands of commuters a new option into Manhattan.

Whereas much of the Bronx enjoys the convenience of time-efficient subway service, for those communities situated on Long Island Sound and the East River, access to rail transport is time consuming, often requiring multiple transfers between bus-to-subway lines. Ironically, these same communities benefit from easy access to the waterfront. Consequently, it is my contention that when the proposed ferry system is in operation it will serve to bolster the economic profile of the Bronx, largely due to a dramatic savings in commute times and related costs.

History clearly attributes the profound success of New York City to its ports and waterways. Rediscovering and reinventing how these same assets can be used today is what I believe this ferry service proposal represents. This proposal deserves to be tested, and it is my hope that, in partnership with your office, we can make this pilot program a reality.

Sincerely

Ruben
Ruben Diaz Jr.