



## **\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\***

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### **NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL LED BY SPEAKER QUINN AND COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN PASS 'HOME RULE MESSAGE' IN SUPPORT OF SPEAKER SILVER AND SENATOR SQUADRON'S 'INTER-CITY BUS BILL'**

New York, NY – Today, The New York City Council unanimously approved a 'home rule message' calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass proposed regulations on 'inter-city' buses. The bill was sponsored by State Legislative Affairs committee Chair Helen Foster and championed by Council member Margaret Chin (District 1 – lower Manhattan).

Put forward by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and State Senator Daniel Squadron, A.4578 and S.2977 would authorize New York City to promulgate regulations on the inter-city tour bus industry. Titled "An act to amend the vehicle and traffic law, in relation to establishing an intercity bus passenger service permit system in cities having a population of one million or more," the bill sets guidelines in which the City would need to work to enact regulation for the permitting, siting, and operations of inter-city tour buses.

Earlier this year, Council member Chin authored a resolution, currently in committee, in calling on Albany to pass the 'inter-city bus bill,' which would provide the City much-needed control over the discount, tour, and charter bus industry.

"Again we ask Albany to let us enact vital legislation to regulate the low-fare and discount tour industry," said Council member Chin. "It is necessary that the State give New York City the authority to improve the safety and overall operation of the low-fare, inter-city bus industry. The City must be allowed to mandate that bus companies qualify for a permit to pick up passenger on our streets. This way we could root out companies with bad safety records, derelict vehicles, and repeat violations. This is essential to improving the safety of bus operations and striking a balance between the need for these buses and the quality of life of the communities in which they operate."

Speaker Silver said, "I am committed to ensuring that we do everything possible to improve safety conditions for intercity bus passengers, many of whom are my constituents in Chinatown. The recent tragic, fatal bus crashes underscore the urgent need to create real oversight of the industry and establish meaningful criteria for issuing permits to operators. This legislation is a priority for me and I look forward to seeing it enacted."

Senator Squadron, "As last week's tragic crash in the Bronx made clear, it is past time to impose reasonable regulations on the discount bus industry. Today's unregulated environment is like the Wild West, and that doesn't work for bus companies, passengers, or the community. Basic regulation at the local level would help enforce safety standards, allow legitimate bus companies to operate their businesses within the bounds of the law, and reduce noise, pollution and chronic congestion that harms the community. I will continue to work with my colleagues and New York City to create reasonable regulations that make discount bus travel safer and more compatible with the community."

"The intercity bus business has grown exponentially in the past few years, and with it problems with traffic congestion, sidewalk obstructions, noise and neighborhood quality of life concerns," said Speaker Christine C. Quinn. "I support Speaker Silver, Senator Squadron, and Council member Chin in their effort to allow New York City to create standards and a process for appropriately regulating these previously unregulated businesses, to better manage when and where they make their discharges and pickups to minimize neighborhood disruptions and to require insurance, to best protect the safety and security of passengers and the public at large."

Council Member Diane Foster said, "It is clear that this type of legislation is needed to help regulate the inter-city buses. These buses provide a valuable service but the manner in which they come into our communities must be regulated to address the congestion, health hazards and safety problems they generate."

City Council Transportation Chair James Vacca said: "Public safety demands the passage of this bill. If the City of New York or the MTA operated its transit services with as little oversight as these low-fare bus companies do, there would be a hue and cry, and rightfully so. The federal government has failed to properly regulate these buses, and as they traverse city streets and serve city residents, the City has a right to know which companies are operating within our borders, where they are picking up and dropping off passengers, and whether they meet even the minimum federal safety standards. This bill will allow our City, for the first time, to take steps to rein in this runaway industry."

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