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Mark D. Levine, Borough President

August 1, 2022

Marie Therese Dominguez  
Commissioner  
NYS Department of Transportation  
50 Wolf Road  
Albany, New York 12232

Ydanis Rodriguez  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Transportation  
55 Water Street  
New York, New York 10038

Commissioners Dominguez and Rodriguez:

I write to request that your agencies immediately begin studying the feasibility of creating a two-way protected bike lane on Route 9A (known also as the West Side Highway) by removing a vehicle lane. Recognizing the complexity of this proposal, I suggest taking a phased approach by immediately developing plans for implementation between Chambers Street and 57<sup>th</sup> Street (Phase I) and developing plans north of 57<sup>th</sup> Street shortly thereafter (Phase II). Additionally, the City should study how best to connect the Hudson River Greenway to the Brooklyn Bridge so that inter-borough travel is safe and convenient.

The Hudson River Greenway is one of the most heavily used bike paths in the country. It offers an exceptional opportunity for commuters wishing to abandon traditional modes of transportation in favor of a sustainable, healthy, and efficient alternative. However, in recent years, congestion on the Greenway, both between cyclists but also between cyclists and pedestrians, has worsened significantly. Cycling has grown in popularity, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. Compounding this issue is an additional increase in electric bicycles use. While recent state legislation banned electric bicycles from the Hudson River Greenway, enforcement is challenging and regulations are confusing for cyclists simply trying to get around.

Installing a protected bike lane on Route 9A would solve both issues by easing congestion on the current path while creating a legal space for cyclists using electric bicycles, many of whom are immigrant, delivery workers who should not be ticketed for trying to work and travel.

Expanding cycling access on the West Side Highway is particularly important given the City's and State's resiliency goals, as well as the important work being done to reduce congestion and make our streets more pedestrian and bike friendly. The eventual launch of Congestion Pricing must be accompanied by infrastructure investments that facilitate easy, convenient and efficient travel without use of a private car. It is imperative that we take steps to ensure that cyclists

traveling long distances, as many who use the Hudson River Greenway are, have access to infrastructure that will keep them safe.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I look forward to working with both of you on our shared goal of making our transportation systems more environmentally friendly and ensuring equal access to mobility throughout the five boroughs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Levine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" being more prominent than the last name "Levine".

Mark Levine  
Manhattan Borough President