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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

**Testimony of Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
To the New York City Council Committee on Transportation Oversight
Hearing – Examining the State of the Port Authority’s New York City Bus
Stations, Progress of Renovations, and Impacts on Surrounding Communities.
February 25, 2015**

Good morning. My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. Thank you to Chair Rodriguez and to the members of the Transportation Committee of the New York City Council for the opportunity to testify today.

The sight of idling buses has become a ubiquitous part of the landscape if you live, work, or travel anywhere near midtown, Manhattan. This is in large part because the Port Authority Bus Terminal, the largest in North America, is overcapacity. This results in some 8,000 buses being pushed into the streets of midtown Manhattan daily. This is a number that is roughly the equivalent of one and half times the entire fleet of MTA buses, concentrated in just one geographical area in Manhattan. This surge of buses is overwhelming the midtown community, and turning Midtown’s streets into one large curbside terminal. What’s more, it’s a problem that’s only expected to worsen: by 2040, peak hour bus traffic is expected to increase by 25-39%.

I am pleased that the Port Authority continues to consider plans for the construction of the 500-bus Galvin Plaza Annex to help further ameliorate the issue. This new garage will not only help reduce bus overflow on city streets by providing additional indoor parking, but it will also help speed bus trips for roughly 30,000 passengers daily.

However, I have heard some concerns that the construction of the garage may be delayed due to funding setbacks. Delaying the construction of this garage will only exacerbate the

problems caused by bus backflow for the residents and workers of Midtown. I strongly encourage the Port Authority to prioritize the construction of the garage and hope to see it as a prominent feature of the 2015 Master Plan, soon to be released by the PANYNJ.

It must also be said, however, that the Galvin Plaza bus garage will not completely resolve the issue posed by increasing bus ridership into Midtown. 11-miles worth of buses wait to enter the terminal each day, and bus ridership continues to grow each year. We will need to entertain additional creative solutions to this problem. I am encouraged, for example, by reports that new operational rules implemented by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) have helped reduce the diversion of buses onto city streets, which has notably reduced congestion on 10th Avenue. I look forward to working with PANYNJ and the Council to identify additional solutions such as these and work towards their implementation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.