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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3211

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MARITIME TRANSPORTATION

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THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

ASSISTANT WHIP FOR THE HOUSE
REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

January 11, 2022

The Honorable Eric Adams
Mayor of New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams:

As a member of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I write to express my concerns regarding ongoing labor issues within the Staten Island Ferry (SIF) system. For over a decade, the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) has refused to settle a fair contract with the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA), the union representing the mariners who operate our ferries. These unresolved issues come at the expense of our mariners and commuters alike, all of which rely on our Staten Island Ferry services to sustain their livelihoods. As our new mayor, it is vital you begin work to remedy these issues and ensure our SIF mariners receive the contract they deserve.

You and I know that transportation staffing issues primarily impact passenger safety. In 2005, the National Transportation Safety Board issued an investigative report assessing the factors which led to the deadly 2003 Staten Island Ferry accident. The report identified NYCDOT's inability to hire and retain professional, qualified mariners to operate the ferry system as a foremost safety concern. Shockingly, this issue persists to this day. I fear that the longer the NYCDOT refuses to offer prevailing wages to SIF mariners, the more operational and passenger safety risks will continue to grow. This is especially relevant as historic inflation sweeps our City.

It is my understanding that MEBA stands ready to negotiate a fair and respectful contract that is long overdue. These negotiations have been stalled by several City administrations and I urge you to end this stalemate by coming to the table and providing a fair and equitable contract. These workers who serve our community should be recognized for the sacrifices they have made over the past decade. I trust that you will respond in kind.

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress