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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Long Island Bus Natural Gas Bus Program

MTA Chairman Peter S. Kalikow and MTA Long Island Bus President Neil S. Yellin today celebrated the tenth anniversary of the MTA Long Island Bus natural gas program and its success in helping to maintain the quality of Long Island's environment.

Joining them were New York State Senate Deputy Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senator Carl Marcellino, Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli and Robert B. Catell, Chairman and CEO of KeySpan Corporation.

Today's ceremony also acknowledged this year's addition of 37 new natural gas fueled buses (bringing the total natural gas bus fleet size to 276), and LI Bus's receipt of the Natural Gas Vehicle (NGV) Coalition 2002 Achievement Award. The NGV Coalition is an international organization comprised of many of the largest vehicle manufacturers and energy companies.

Mr. Kalikow said, "A decade ago, the Federal Transit Administration, New York State, Nassau County, LI Bus, and the MTA made a commitment to energy savings and cleaner air. By the end of next year we will meet that goal set back in 1992 - every one of our Long Island buses will run on compressed natural gas."

"Maintaining the quality of our environment on Long Island and throughout New York State remains our priority," said Senator Skelos. "I am pleased that the state's support for the LI Bus clean-air natural gas program is helping to ensure that the air we breathe remains clean and pure."

Assemblyman DiNapoli said, "LI Bus's foresight with its investment in natural gas vehicles has set the standard within the transit industry. More importantly, this technology has greatly diminished our petroleum fuel consumption and limited pollutants in our environment resulting in improved air quality."

"LI Bus sets an example of environmental excellence for all businesses and governmental agencies that operate vehicle fleets," said Robert B. Catell, Chairman and CEO of KeySpan Corporation. "KeySpan was proud to nominate Long Island Bus for a 2002 Achievement Award of the Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition, and prouder still that it won and that its commitment to clean air was nationally recognized."

Mr. Yellin said, "LI Bus's clean-air natural gas program is now one the largest and most successful alternative fuel programs in the nation."

LI Bus is the second largest transit bus system in New York State. Its natural gas program was initiated in 1992 with ten pilot buses funded through a federal grant. Upon completion of the pilot program, LI Bus began replacing all of its replacement-eligible diesel buses with natural gas vehicles in 1995. With the support of the federal government and New York State, 233 natural gas buses were placed into service since 1995. With the addition of 37 new buses in 2002, the natural gas fleet will stand at 276 buses (83% of total fleet.) In addition, LI Bus installed compressor stations at each of its two operating depots and modified these facilities to safely fuel, repair and store its vehicles.

LI Bus serves as a model for promoting the findings of Governor George E. Pataki's Quality Communities Interagency Task Force, which specifically recommended that State agencies should take the lead in promoting the expanded use of clean fuel vehicles in New York. Further, its entire fleet, including all of the natural gas vehicles, was built in Oriskany, New York by Orion Bus Industries.