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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

Media Personalities Urge LIRR Riders To "Watch The Gap" And "Mind Their Cell-Phone Manners"

The familiar voice talking about watching the gap and cell phone manners on your LIRR station loudspeaker may seem out of place. That's one of the reasons it's being used, to get your attention. Some well-known media celebrities are now helping to carry important MTA Long Island Rail Road customer-related messages. They are part of the LIRR's continuing efforts reminding customers to watch the gap and to exercise cell phone courtesy while on-board trains.

The announcements from CNBC's Maria Bartiromo, NBC's Al Roker and 1010 WINS' Juliet Papa are being broadcast over the public address systems at Penn Station and line stations. Stations that have video broadcasts of the audio will also carry the celebrity messages. The gap safety message from Maria Bartiromo first aired in December, gap safety and courtesy messages from Juliet Papa started this week and Al Roker to be aired in the near future. The media personalities graciously donated their time as a public service and provided the announcements at no cost to the LIRR.

LIRR President Helena Williams said the idea for using celebrity voices originated with an MTA board member from Long Island. "Mitch Pally told me he noticed that some railroad customers were not really paying attention to our regular safety-related public address announcements. He suggested that we try something different to get their attention. Hopefully, these celebrity messages along with our "Be Train Smart Tune In To Safety" and "Courtesy Matters" campaigns will help to drive home to our customers the importance of their paying attention to the gap and not being "cell-fish."

There are six celebrity messages currently being aired or will be aired soon. They are:

"Hi... this is urging you to hold your child's hand while stepping over the gap."

"Hi... this is reminding you to watch the gap while entering and exiting you train."

"Hi... this is asking you to be considerate and allow others to exit the train before you board."

"Hi... this is asking you to "Watch The Gap"tion is expected in 2011. The eastbound booths have not been used since 1986 when one-way toll collection began.

"Removing these unused eastbound booths and re-engineering the roadway for normal speed is a major feature of a modernization package that will ultimately produce a more efficient and safer travel corridor," said MTA Executive Director Chief Executive Officer Lee Sander. " These improvements are designed to address toll plaza area changes that inc