

# Raritan Valley Line Mayors Alliance

Representing riders from 31 towns using the RVL  
rvlmayors@gmail.com  
Twitter - @mayorsrvl  
Facebook - Raritan Valley Line Mayors Alliance

---

PRESS RELEASE  
February 12, 2019

For Immediate Release

## **Mayors Join Together to Push for Better Service on Raritan Valley Line**

The 31 Mayors of towns in four counties have joined together and are working with NJ State Senators on several issues important to people using the Raritan Valley Line trains. The primary goal is getting a one-seat ride into NY Penn Station during peak hours but the RVL Mayors Alliance is also pressing for the return of the off-peak direct trains.

In a letter to the Senators, the RVL Mayors Co-chairs Shelley Brindle of Westfield, Colleen Mahr of Fanwood and Bob Fazen of Bound Brook asked for confirmation and a date when the off-peak trains will be put back into service. "Last August, we were told trains would resume in January now we hear late Spring. Our residents rely on these trains, the only direct service into NY Penn Station," the letter stated.

The group is working with seven Senators representing the 31 towns:

Sen. Christopher Bateman, 16<sup>th</sup> District  
Sen. Robert Smith, 17<sup>th</sup> District  
Sen. Patrick Diegnan, 18<sup>th</sup> District  
Sen. Joseph Cryan, 20<sup>th</sup> District  
Sen. Thomas Kean, 21<sup>st</sup> District  
Sen. Nicholas Scutari, 22<sup>nd</sup> District  
Sen. Michael Doherty, 23<sup>rd</sup> District

"The RVL Mayors, a bipartisan group, are in a unique position to fight for our residents," said Fanwood Mayor Mahr. "Every day, we hear from family, friends and neighbors about train delays, cancellations and having to transfer trains in Newark. How many times can you tell your boss it was the train?"

The other important issue on the Mayor's agenda is the Gateway Tunnel Project. The Build Gateway Now Coalition recently announced the RVL Mayors' Alliance as a new member in the effort to construct the much-needed new Hudson tunnel. Westfield Mayor Brindle, a commuter for 20 years herself, stressed that commuters cannot wait any longer for efficient and safe train service. "The need for a new trans-Hudson tunnel and Portal Bridge are no longer open for debate. It is unreasonable to expect people to accept the current level of train service."

Mayor Fazen added this is especially painful for those who ride RVL. "We don't have direct train service despite ridership that is equal or greater than some lines with multiple direct trains."

Last week, Mayor Mahr, who is also President of the NJ League of Municipalities, testified before the State Transportation Committee on S-3410 to create the Gateway Development Commission, an important step moving the Gateway project forward.

Mayor Mahr stressed the serious implications of inaction. "The 100 year old tunnels were further compromised after Superstorm Sandy leaving behind salt that is eating away at the reinforcing steel, concrete, electrical and signal systems. Another serious event that results in a tunnel closure will force tens of thousands of riders to find alternate train, bus or car travel and cause huge disruptions."

"Both of these issues are a priority for Mayors across the state, who hear firsthand from their constituents and who understand that safe and efficient train transportation is tied to the economic well-being of our communities," Mayor Mahr testified.

Mayor Brindle added "a one-seat ride increases home values in all of our communities and improves the quality of life for our residents."

Find Raritan Valley Line Mayors Alliance on Facebook, on Twitter @rvlmayors or email us at [rvlmayors@gmail.com](mailto:rvlmayors@gmail.com)

###

Photos:

Mayor Colleen Mahr with Brian Fritsch and Steve Sigmund or Build Gateway Now Alliance

Senators Tom Kean, Kip Bateman and Joseph Cryan meeting with RVL Mayors