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To: Spitalnick, Amy (OMB)

Subject: subway pool report

Mayor Bill de Blasio arrived at the Fourth Avenue/Ninth Street subway stop in Park Slope just before 8 a.m., beside a small group waiting for the B61 bus. (He had been driven from Gracie Mansion to his favored gym, near the Brooklyn home the de Blasios left for Gracie last year. Per an aide: He arrived at the gym shortly after 6 a.m., then had coffee with Senator Charles E. Schumer around 7:30.)

Among the mayor's fellow subway riders: Mr. Schumer, city transportation commissioner Polly Trottenberg and Kathryn S. Wylde, president of the Partnership for New York City.

The reason for the trip? Quoth the mayor's office:

A bipartisan group of over 60 mayors will join together on a day of action today with over 300 participants across the country, representing 150 + cities and spanning nearly all 50 states. They will join transportation providers, businesses, transportation system users, state partners, and others to call on Congress to pass a long-term transportation bill that increases investments and local control in our subways, buses, ferries, roads, and bridges.

Here's the Mayor's op-ed:

<http://www.amny.com/opinion/congress-do-the-right-thing-by-nyc-1.10224738>

And a WaPo story on bipartisan push:

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/officials-use-decrepit-bridges-highways-to-make-their-point/2015/04/08/7db523e4-de14-11e4-a500-1c5bb1d8ff6a_story.html

Mr. de Blasio swiped himself into the station, where an R train was waiting at the platform. (The mayor has been dinged before for slipping through the emergency gates without paying: <http://blogs.wsj.com/metropolis/2014/08/12/mayor-de-blasio-gets-a-free-ride/>)

A woman, seeing the commotion of cops and handlers, asked what the fuss was about. "Ah, the mayor," she said, upon learning. "Just the mayor."

She walked on.

Mr. Schumer said loudly that he had \$20 left on his MetroCard. "Do we go on just any old subway?" he asked the group. They did.

And then the politicians, holding stacks of paper outlining the reason for their visit — urging Congress to increase transportation funding — began working the car.

"We've spent a few days leafleting in our time," the mayor said to Mr. Schumer.

Mr. Schumer urged riders to put a "selfie" on social media describing the event. One rider asked how his wife, Iris Weinshall -- the former DOT commissioner under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg -- was doing.

The mayor stayed on message.

"Can you help us?"

“We’re trying to create pressure?”

“Can you help us out on this? We need your voice heard.”

He handed one sheet to a worker wearing an MTA uniform.

As the R pulled into Union Street, an abrupt stop left Mr. Schumer stumbling down the aisle.

“I’m falling down,” he reported.

Nearby, Mr. de Blasio struck up a conversation with David Rankin, 39, from Park Slope, who thanked the mayor for dropping the city’s appeal to the stop-and-frisk case, *Floyd v. City of New York*.

“Thanks for Floyd, it’s a great thing for New York,” Mr. Rankin said.

“As we’ve seen,” the mayor replied, “the sky didn’t fall.”

Crime, he noted, had continued to drop.

Mr. Schumer had moved onto a conversation about last night’s Yankees game, which he did not see.

“Did they win yesterday?” he asked a rider.

Yes, 4-3, he was told. “I’ll take it.”

He asked another rider about the logo on his hat, which had come from Barcelona, the man said.

“Excelente,” the senator said.

Several riders asked for pictures with one or both men.

“You’re so tall!” one observed as an aide snapped her picture with Mr. de Blasio.

Alison Warren, 24, from Park Slope, let out a three-word exclamation at the sight of the mayor: “Oh. My. God.”

“So nice to meet you!” she said.

The train reached DeKalb Avenue, then pulled away.

“I missed my subway stop,” she said, “but that’s okay.”

Mr. de Blasio and Mr. Schumer worked their way to the south end of the car, where the senator began filibustering a half-dozen riders about the gas tax.

A woman got up to leave. “Is this your stop?” Mr. Schumer asked.

She walked toward the doors but did not get off right away.

One man had begun recording the two speakers with his phone. Two seats over, a woman, inches from Mr. de Blasio, declined to look up. She was reading Page Six of the New York Post.

Then, for reasons not immediately clear to the pool, the Boston accents began.

“Wicked fahhh,” Mr. de Blasio said. The senator joined him.

“Green Monstahhhh,” Mr. Schumer said.

They laughed. “That’s actually how we talk,” the mayor said dryly.

Mr. Schumer turned attention to his tie, which included renderings of pigs, eggs and blocks of cheese. He called it a “breakfast tie” and asked riders to guess why. (The answer: “bacon, egg and cheese.”)

The senator also found a rider who attended James Madison High School, his Brooklyn alma mater.

Mr. de Blasio mentioned that he had seen another alum, Senator Bernie Sanders, at an event on Wednesday.

Another man, who had engaged the politicians during their discussion of federal transportation funding, prepared to leave. Mr. Schumer asked if the man was a native New Yorker. He was Egyptian, he said.

“Egyptian!” Mr. Schumer exclaimed. “Very nice! We love you.”

Pool then attempted to speak to the New York Post reader who had refused to make eye contact with the politicians. She did not look up.

“Intrepid,” the mayor said, perhaps sensing pool’s failure. He smiled.

For reasons that, again, were not immediately clear — pool blames intermittent subway noise — the group began discussing the decades-old animated television series “Underdog.”

“I loved Underdog so much,” the mayor said. He noted that the “alter ego was Shoeshine Boy.”

(By Whitehall Street, the group had grown considerably less zealous about flyering.)

Mr. Schumer reminisced about his childhood trips to Yankee Stadium, when he would ride the subway for 15 cents from Sheepshead Bay, he said, then buy bleacher seats for 35 cents.

“And now that same seat will only cost you \$200,” the mayor said.

Moments later, around 8:15 a.m., they arrived at the City Hall stop. A woman paused as the men pushed through the turnstiles. She glanced at them briefly, then went on her way.