

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MONDAY, MAY 17 1999

Contact:  
Patricia Dolan  
(718) 592-5757

### **QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS GETS COMMITMENT FROM COUNCIL SPEAKER ON AIR TRAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS FREE TO VOTE THEIR CONSCIENCE**

The Queens Civic Congress [QCC], a coalition of more than 90 civic and community organizations which span the borough of Queens, secured a commitment that the City Council's consideration of the AirTrain will not involve a "leadership vote," announced President Sean M. Walsh. Addressing a question by Vice President Patricia Dolan, City Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone repeatedly made clear that the AirTrain involved no "institutional" issues and the Council leadership would not seek to influence how Council Members vote. Speaker Vallone delivered the keynote address at the QCC's Monday, May 17 Membership Meeting in southeast Queens,, at at York College.

The QCC opposes the Van Wyck portion of the Airtrain and is following the MTA scoping hearings on a one-seat ride to LaGuardia airport. It supports a plan to connect the LIRR at Willets Point to the airport via the Flushing River shoreline.

In addition, the Congress has successfully managed to create a united front against Queens College's attempt to change its mission from an affordable college education for city students into a campus of dormitories for out of state students.

The Congress is working closely with civic associations and is investigating conditions in the Buildings Department concerning illegal construction and conversions.

The QCC also opposed the 4 percent Water Board hike in its rates and called for the elimination of capital costs from the water and sewer rate structure which is the cause of these yearly rate increases.

The QCC supports the Bronx community efforts to prevent the construction of a costly water filtration plant at Van Cortlandt Park. The QCC, in letters to Queens Council Members, supported enhanced watershed protection measures.