



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 44

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to remove New York City Transit and MTA Bus Company from the control of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and transfer control to the city of New York or in the alternative to cede greater decision making authority in the planning and operations of NYCT and MTA Bus Company to the City of New York.

By Council Members Avella, Fidler, Gentile, James, Nelson, and Weprin

Whereas, The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) was created by New York State in 1965 and is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving public transportation in the Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Commuter Transportation District, as created by section 1262 of the New York State Public Authorities Law, consists of the five counties that comprise New York City, as well as Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester Counties; and

Whereas, The MTA is the parent entity of several subsidiaries that aid the MTA in carrying out its mission, including New York City Transit (NYCT) and MTA Bus Company; and

Whereas, NYCT was created in June 1953 to assume responsibility for buses, bus routes, trains and subways formerly run by New York City's Board of Transportation and actually preexisted the creation of the MTA; and

Whereas, Seventy-five percent (75%) of fare-related revenue comes from NYCT bus and subway riders, 13 percent from Long Island Rail Road passengers and 12 percent from Metro-North passengers; and

Whereas, NYCT receives \$ 24 million of the total surplus from tolls and bridges to run the City buses and subways, while the remainder is split with 50 percent going to NYCT and the remainder going split between the Long Island Rail Road and MetroNorth; and

Whereas, Partly because of the surplus allocation, suburban commuters pay for 46.2 percent of their ride compared to the 61.6 percent paid by NYCT riders, a proportion that is considered the highest in the nation; and

Whereas, According to survey data collected by the Independent Budget Office, (excluding EZ-Pass users because they may forget they are paying a toll and therefore underreport this fact), sixty-one percent (61%) of Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (TBTA) bridge and tunnel users are New York City residents, while about 39 percent come from Nassau, Suffolk, Northern New York State suburbs, Connecticut, and New Jersey; and

Whereas, According to the Straphangers Campaign, while NYCT carries 84 percent of the state's mass transit riders, it receives only 63 percent of the state aid to mass transit ridership, which includes disproportionately lower capital funds from fare-backed bonds; and

Whereas, the NYCT's 2003 operating budget accounted for more than 65% of the MTA's total 2003 operating budget, and the NYCT's average weekday passengers represented over 90% of the MTA's 2003 average weekday passengers and NYCT's 2003 employment was over 75% of the entire MTA 2003 employment; and

Whereas, In July 2004, the MTA released its proposed budget detailing a projected deficit of \$436 million in 2005 and \$1.35 billion in 2006, despite proposed service cuts amounting to \$91 million and fare hikes estimated to generate an additional \$219 million, an impact on riders of \$310 million; and

Whereas, In March 2005, the MTA announced a new budget forecast based on an additional \$301 million in revenues not projected in its July 2004 budget forecast and the State legislature agreed to provide funds to pay for "state of good repair" needs for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 2005; and

Whereas, The MTA's plan for service cuts and fare hikes remains largely unchanged, despite the additional cash flow; and

Whereas, If the MTA's budget were truly deficit-driven, the Agency would proportionately rescind some of its service cuts and fare hikes due to these new revenue projections; and

Whereas, The service cuts when fully imposed will result in the closure of 164 part-time token booths, reduced service on other bus lines, a reduction of ten percent (10%) of subway service on most lines, and the elimination of thirty-three (33) local bus routes and has already resulted in fare hikes for monthly and weekly MetroCards and for express bus service; and

Whereas, The MTA has been carrying out plans to redeploy 619 station agents throughout the system, most likely shifting station agents out of neighborhood stations into tourist areas and transit hubs which will endanger commuters at any unmanned stations; and

Whereas, Bus service cuts have imposed and will continue to impose a significant inconvenience and economic hardship upon City residents who rely on buses as the life blood of the community, especially those residing outside of the Manhattan central business district, and

Whereas, A fare increase for buses and subways places a burden on New Yorkers that is unfair, and that the Council believes will only serve to drive people away from our great city; and

Whereas, MTA Bus Company was created in September 2004 to assume responsibility for operations of the seven private bus companies that operated under franchise agreements granted by the New York City Department of Transportation and have begun taking over individual companies on a staggered buyout schedule; and

Whereas, The seven bus lines combined serve over 400,000 persons each day and provide jobs for hundreds of employees and there are concerns that the quality of bus service has declined among those bus companies whose control has been transferred to the MTA; and

Whereas, It is unreasonable that a city the size of New York is restricted in its ability to exercise meaningful decision making authority in the planning and operations of a transportation system, which operates exclusively within its own borders; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the Council of the City of New York call upon the New York State Legislature to remove NYCT and MTA Bus Company from the control of the MTA and transfer control to the City of New York or in

the alternative to cede greater decision making authority in the planning and operations of NYCT and MTA Bus Company to the City of New York.

RR
Res 1216/2005