



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1181-2000, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 1181

Resolution calling upon the appropriate committee of the City Council to hold hearings on the non-compliance by Metropolitan Transportation Authority with the mandate of Chapter 422 of the Laws of 1999 that those New York City transit users, with serious mental illness who also receive Supplemental Social Security, pay the same half-fare as other persons with a disability.

By Council Members Lopez, Clarke, Boyland, Carrion, Espada, Henry, Marshall, Nelson, Pinkett, Warden and White; also Council Members Foster, Harrison, Leffler, Linares, Michels, Perkins, Spigner and Watkins.

Whereas, Serious mental illness is often chronic, results in substantial functional disability and many persons suffering from serious mental illness are eligible to receive supplemental social security income (SSI) benefits; and  
Whereas, Currently, reduced transit fares are available to persons with disability from blindness, mental retardation, deafness and conditions which impair a person's ability to use their limbs; and

Whereas, Chapter 103 of the laws of 1997 authorized the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in consultation with the State Office of Mental Health to study the feasibility of providing half-fares to persons with serious mental illness; and

Whereas, On May 18, 1999, the MTA distributed a draft of this study to, among others, members of the legislature and the mental health community; and

Whereas, Subsequently, Chapter 422 of the Laws of 1999 added a new subdivision 15 to Section 1266 of the public authorities law and required the MTA to implement a half-fare program for persons with serious mental illness who receive SSI benefits; and

Whereas, The Metropolitan Transportation Authority has taken the position that this law only applies to commuters traveling between New York City and the suburbs; and

Whereas, Advocates for the mentally ill, and legislators from both parties in the State legislature including Member of the Assembly James F. Brennan, Chair of the State Assembly Committee on Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and Senator Frank Padavan, who are sponsors of the legislation, agree that this result was not the intent of Chapter 422 of the laws of 1999; and

Whereas, Reportedly, the cost to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of providing reduced fares in the City and the suburbs would be \$7 million annually if the fare is restricted to those individuals who receive SSI benefits; and

Whereas, The legislature manifestly did not intend to provide reduced fares to commuters from surrounding counties but not to the users of New York City Transit; and

Whereas, This honorable body believes that persons with serious mental illness who need the assistance provided by Supplemental Social Security Income should receive a reduced fare that is already provided to persons with other kinds of disability; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the appropriate committee of the City Council hold hearings on the non-compliance by Metropolitan Transportation Authority with the mandate of Chapter 422 of the Laws of 1999 that those New York City transit users, with serious mental illness who also receive Supplemental Social Security, pay the same half-fare as other persons with a disability.

Referred to the Committee on Transportation.

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