



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas K. Duane

In This Economy, We Must Stop Shortchanging New York City!

THOMAS K. DUANE April 15, 2009

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Senator Thomas K. Duane, Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal Introduce Legislation to Restore the New York City Commuter Tax

April 15, 2009

In a year in which the City of New York's finances are under enormous strain, Senator Thomas K. Duane (D, WFP Manhattan) and Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (D, WFP Manhattan) today announced the introduction of legislation, S.4122/A.5959, which will restore the New York City commuter tax.

Senator Duane said, "Since 1999, New Yorkers have been subsidizing the thousands of commuters who come to New York City daily and do not pay for the services they use. In this era of fiscal distress, with our ability to provide basic social services curtailed, we must all pay our fair share. The commuter tax was in effect for more than three decades before it was repealed and since then New Yorkers have absorbed higher taxes for the life-saving services that we simply cannot live without. I have been fighting to get the commuter tax

back and I will not stop until that is a reality."

Assemblymember Rosenthal said, "People who commute into New York City in order to work receive many City benefits without paying any of the costs. Workers who live within the City's boundaries are essentially subsidizing those who do not, by absorbing the cost of police, fire, and emergency services to name but a few. A tax on commuters would merely reinstate the tax imposed prior to 1999. The revenues raised from this tax would greatly aid the City's fiscal health and allow the continued provision of services upon which both residents and nonresidents alike have come to depend."

According to the bill's sponsors, at the time of the repeal, proponents claimed that the City of New York had a \$2 billion surplus and could afford to repeal the commuter tax. But now, with the world economic crisis greatly impacting the fiscal health of New York City, and the rest of New York State, it is time that all who benefit from city services pay for their share.

"The City of New York reports that we lose an estimated \$500 million annually because this tax is no longer in effect," said Senator Duane. "At a time in which budget shortfalls have affected us all, a commuter tax provides an equitable and stable source of revenue to fund vital City services that we all share."