



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## MTA's \$7 Million Dog House

STEPHEN M. SALAND November 23, 2009

| ISSUE: **MTA (METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY)**

I was beyond stunned when I read the *NY Post* article that described the MTA's plan to build a \$7 million dog house. I'll repeat that just in case you missed it: a \$7 million dog house. It's not close to April 1<sup>st</sup>, so I can assure you; this is no April fools joke.

According to *The Post*, the MTA plans to buy land for \$1 million for their security dogs. Adding insult to injury this property is located in Stormville, right here in Dutchess County. (Let's just hope it's not taking a tax paying property off the tax rolls.)

A few months ago I expressed my outrage that the MTA is squandering \$20 million on an employee lounge. Now, I find out that they will be purchasing land in Dutchess County to be used as a home to train their security dogs. The cost of the land is \$1 million and the grand total of their dog training facility is estimated at \$7 million! This is how the MTA is using our tax dollars?

It's so absurd I'm thinking it should be considered as an entry in the next Ripley's Believe It or Not publication.

I understand that security dogs are needed for mass transit, but why is it that the MTA can't find a way to train and house the dogs without using \$7 million of our hard earned tax dollars?

I have called upon the Governor and the Comptroller to move forward with a forensic audit on the MTA. Do we need any more proof that it's beyond necessary? It's this type of

frivolous spending that has contributed to the agency's fiscal instability. And despite the multi-billion bailout that imposed the unfair payroll tax on us, the MTA continues to fritter away our tax dollars.

This is not just ridiculous; it's an abhorrent abuse of their authority and an offensive use of our money.