



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Martin J. Golden

## Senator Golden Opposes Mta Approved Service Reductions for Senate District

MARTIN J. GOLDEN December 22, 2009

| ISSUE: **TRANSPORTATION**

### LETTER TO CHAIRMAN JAY WALDER OUTLINES OPPOSITION

Brooklyn- State Senator Marty Golden (R-C, Brooklyn) has issued the following letter to Metropolitan Transit Authority Chairman Jay Walder opposing the service reductions approved by the MTA Board at their December 16, 2009 board meeting.

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December 21, 2009

Jay Walder, Chairman and CEO

Metropolitan Transit Authority

347 Madison Avenue

New York, New York 10017

Dear Chairman Walder,

I am strongly opposed to the budget cuts approved by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board at its meeting on December 16, 2009, which in my district will include the complete elimination of the B 23 and B 37 bus routes, as well as overnight service on the B31 and the B64, and service on the X27 and X 37 buses.

These budget reductions will have a devastating impact on the local economy and sharply limit the ability of local residents to travel, including many senior citizens who are also facing cuts to the Access a Ride program. Also, these cuts target school children, by eliminating free student metro cards at a time when many parents already face financial difficulties because of the loss of jobs and other income.

At a time when we are encouraging people to leave their cars home and rely on mass transit, the MTA's actions will have the opposite effect. Additionally, the MTA's choices will also hurt our senior citizens, many of whom came of age at a time when you really didn't need to drive to live in our City. Others may no longer be able to be drive because of illness. They depend on mass transit to shop, see their doctors and other medical providers, and just avoid the isolation of being homebound—which many will become if bus and subway service is scaled back and access-a-ride services are reduced.

Finally, the MTA's decision to eliminate free metro cards for school children is hard-hearted, as I do not need to tell you how many families are suffering during this recession. This decision by the MTA will cost every parent in New York City whose children use these passes at least \$810 per year per child. Additionally, due to the Federal No Child Left Behind Act, more students are travelling greater distances to attend school.

These cuts are unconscionable and, I would suggest, avoidable. I would urge you to approach the administration in Washington to secure additional financial support for our mass transit,

as the revitalization of New York's economy is critical to our nation's economic re-birth. I would also ask the MTA Board to go back to the drawing board. Many of these cuts will be implemented later in the fiscal year, giving the MTA time to come up with alternatives.

No one is naïve enough to believe that nothing has to be done. However, we must work to find constructive alternatives that will allow for a fiscally responsible MTA to serve as an important part of New York's economy and as a lifeline to so many communities and our people.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Golden

State Senator