



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Statement From Senator Fuschillo on Mta Board's Decision to Raise Bridge & Tunnel Tolls

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. October 27, 2010

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“Once again, the MTA Board is steering New York State in the wrong direction by asking Long Islanders to pay more, this time by raising cash tolls on major bridges and tunnels from \$5.50 to \$6.50 and increasing the E-Z Pass toll by 5 percent.

Both residents and businesses will again realize the negative impact of these increases. Small businesses will now face higher costs because the delivery trucks traveling to and from Long Island and New York City will be paying more in tolls. Ultimately, these costs will be passed down to consumers in the form of higher prices. Residents will also have to pay more each time they use the major bridges and tunnels to drive to and from Long Island.

Long Island is already paying over \$341 million a year more in higher fees, fares, and taxes to fund the MTA. This includes the job killing MTA payroll tax which was imposed on every Long Island employer, including small businesses, municipalities, non-profits, and school districts. The MTA also recently hiked LIRR fares for the third time in four years.

As I've stated before, the MTA should do more to find savings internally before asking residents to pay more yet again. State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli estimates the MTA could save about \$60 million annually through better overtime management, an area which saw spending increase by 26% between 2005-09. In another report, the Comptroller said better management of the MTA's vast real-estate portfolio could yield additional savings. Overall, six reports issued by Comptroller DiNapoli on the MTA since 2009 found \$296 million in wasteful spending and unrealized savings opportunities.

Once again, Long Island is being treated like an ATM for the MTA. These continued price increases are making transportation more and more unaffordable at a time when so many are barely living paycheck to paycheck. The MTA Board of Directors is again making New York State unaffordable with their decisions.”

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