



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

Senator Martins Uncovers Unfair Practice by the MTA

JACK M. MARTINS February 8, 2011

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New York State Senator Jack M. Martins last week uncovered an unfair practice engaged in by the MTA. Beginning December 30, in order to get a refund on a train ticket that is not used, a customer must pay a \$10 “processing fee.” In many instances, the fee is more expensive than the ticket.

“I am appalled that the MTA is unwilling to give customers refunds by charging them a fee. Customers who purchase a ticket but don’t use the service should be able to get a refund on their money. It’s common sense,” said Senator Martins.

The “processing fee” was brought to the attention of Senator Martins by a constituent, Susan McClellan of New Hyde Park, who wrote a letter to Senator Martins. The Senator responded promptly to the correspondence and met McClellan at the Mineola Train Station.

On January 12, McClellan decided to take the train to work in Long Island City because of bad weather. She bought a \$7.25 ticket for the ride home. However, she received a ride from a friend and did not need the ticket. When she went to return the ticket for a refund, she was shocked to hear that there was a \$10 processing fee to return it, \$2.75 more than the cost of the ticket.

“I thought that this couldn’t be real,” said McClellan, who added that she didn’t understand why she couldn’t return a ticket she didn’t use.

The processing fee was part of the new policies that went into effect on December 30 that also contained fare hikes.

“The fact that the LIRR is charging a fee to refund an unused ticket is just plain arrogant. Customers have already been hit with fare increase and service cuts and, if that weren’t enough, local businesses, school districts and municipalities have been hit with a payroll tax to bail out the MTA. It’s time the customers come first. I would like to thank Ms. McClellan for bringing this issue to my attention,” Senator Martins said.

The Senator said he reached out to the MTA and would even consider sponsoring legislation to repeal the processing fee.