



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senators Fuschillo & Martins Fight to End Unfair Lirr Ticket Refund Surcharges

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. June 10, 2011

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### ***Legislation Would Require MTA to Give Customers Full Refunds on Unused One-Way and Round-Trip LIRR Tickets***

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) and Senator Jack Martins (R-Mineola) today called for an end to the MTA's practice of charging LIRR customers a fee for LIRR ticket refunds which in many cases costs more than the ticket itself.

Senator Martins introduced legislation to end the unfair surcharge after receiving an email from a constituent, Susan McClellan, who explained she was being charged a \$10 processing fee to return a ticket that costs \$7.25. Senator Martins promptly put through the bill to alleviate this unfair practice. Senator Fuschillo is cosponsoring the legislation.

"My bill will allow customers to return unused tickets within six months of the date the ticket was purchased for a full refund. It's a common sense bill that protects consumers. Customers have had to deal with numerous service cuts and fare increases imposed by the MTA. To also charge consumers a fee to get a refund on a service they did not use is indicative of how the MTA has been treating its customers. This processing fee is unfair and has to be repealed. I felt it was important to sponsor this legislation, and I would like to thank Susan McClellan for emailing me," said Senator Martins.

"Forcing customers to pay a ticket refund fee, which in some cases is more than the ticket itself, is completely unreasonable. This legislation would require the MTA to end this unjust practice and provide full refunds for unused tickets," said Senator Fuschillo, Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee.

As of last December 30<sup>th</sup>, the MTA shortened the amount of time LIRR tickets remain valid from six months to just two weeks. While passengers can return unused tickets for a refund within thirty days of purchase, the MTA now charges them a \$10 surcharge for each ticket return transaction.

Passengers who purchased one-way or round-trip tickets are often dissuaded from obtaining refunds because in many cases, the surcharge costs just as much, or more, than the original ticket. As an example, New Hyde Park resident Susan McClellan purchased a one-way LIRR ticket on January 12<sup>th</sup> from Long Island City to return home, but ended up not using the ticket because she got a ride home. When she tried to return the ticket, she was told she'd have to pay a \$10 surcharge, \$2.75 more than the entire ticket was worth.

The legislation (S3778B) would end this unfair refund surcharge by requiring the MTA to provide passengers with a full refund for unused one-way and roundtrip tickets, without imposing any surcharges.

Passengers would also have six months to either seek a refund or use the ticket under the proposed law.

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