



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins Leads Fights to Change LIRR Ticket Policy

JACK M. MARTINS July 27, 2012

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The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced that it will be extending the validity period for one-way and round-trip Long Island Railroad tickets from two weeks to two months as well as the refund period for those tickets from one month to two months in an effort to improve customer service.

According to the MTA, the change in policy came as a result of complaints from customers and elected officials. Senator Jack M. Martins and Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel, have

been out at the forefront in urging the MTA to change the ticket policy. Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel both sponsored legislation in the Senate and Assembly respectively to extend the period of time LIRR tickets of good for as well as the period during which customers can seek a refund for unused tickets, helping to spark the change.

According to Senator Martins, suburban commuters have been treated disproportionately to city subway riders when it comes to the fairness of some customer service policies. The change in the ticket validity policy is a step in the right direction.

“In 2010, the MTA saw fit to shorten the period of time LIRR tickets are valid to two weeks. Riders understandably voice their objection and I completely agreed with them, which is why I sponsored legislation to extend the validity period,” Senator Martins said. “I am pleased the MTA listened to their concerns and took action to address them. This plan is another positive step towards improving customer service for riders and I applaud the MTA for changing the policy.”

A member of the Assembly Transportation Committee and a strong advocate for mass transit commuters, Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel said, “The MTA is doing the right thing. By extending the time frame for ticket validity and refunds they are sending the right message to our suburban commuters. The LIRR is listening and showing respect for their mass transit customers.”

“We’re pleased that the cost containment efforts of our commuter railroads, combined with increased ridership, make it possible to broaden our ticket validity and refund policies to further benefit Long Island Rail Road and Metro North customers,” said MTA Chairman Joseph J. Lhota. “This benefit will cost the railroads \$6 million, but combined with the expanded service investments announced last week, shows the MTA’s commitment to customer service.”

Senator Martins and Assemblywoman Schimel's legislation also included the repeal of a \$10 processing fee that customers are charged for returning unused tickets. The bill passed the Senate three times; however, the processing fee remains in effect.