



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Straphangers say they want city to pitch in funds for MTA repairs, new Independent Democratic Conference survey finds

JEFFREY D. KLEIN February 5, 2018

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IDC introduces legislation to have city match state's commitment to fund phase 1 of MTA's Subway Action Plan

Albany, NY — A new Independent Democratic Conference survey of MTA riders found that a majority of city residents believe that the city should pay \$428 million to match the state's commitment to fund emergency repairs outlined in Phase 1 of the MTA's Subway Action Plan.

The results published on Monday in, "Back on Track," a policy analysis of the issue, 75 percent of city riders indicated that the city should pay, and 69 percent said they were not opposed to using city sales tax to cover the cost.

Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) introduced legislation to direct \$428 million in New York City sales tax to fund its share of Phase 1 of the MTA's Subway Action Plan. The State of New York already committed to pitching in an equal \$428 million to finance the critical plan.

"New York City straphangers have suffered enough delays and we cannot delay funding this project anymore. This shared financing immediately infuses the MTA with desperately

needed cash to fix broken signals and tracks. The state already stepped up with its share, and the city, whose residents use the system daily, must share in the responsibility for maintaining it. If New York City riders think the ‘summer of hell’ was bad, we’re going to have every season of hell if we don’t take imminent action,” **said Senator Klein.**

New York City collects over \$7 billion dollars in sales tax annually through purchases like prepared food, clothing over \$110, parking, electronics, beauty services and more. The City of New York also ended the last fiscal year with a \$4 billion surplus.

The legislation captures an infinitesimal six percent of city sales tax, for a one-time need, in order to make desperate repairs to a degraded subway system that serves its residents and businesses.

The Transit Workers Union hailed the Independent Democratic Conference proposal.

“New York City subway riders need an immediate solution to the financing gap that exists. The proposed legislative solution by Senator Klein and the members of the IDC conference is a rational and sensible solution to the MTA's shortfall, and should be adopted,” **said TWU Local 100 President Tony Utano.**

The concept of capturing city sales tax is based on how the state handled the savings realized from STARC bond refinancing.

Phase 1 of the MTA’s Subway Action Plan includes repairs to 1,300 broken signals, which are often a cause for delay. The agency would use this funding to address serious track issues, and dedicate additional workers and increased emergency response teams for repairs. Triple-time welding work on rails, with increased track welding capacity, is also included in the first leg of the plan.

Phase 1 needs a short-term revenue stream, whereas, future infrastructure concerns would rely on other methods under consideration for long-term financing.

"As we previously heard during transportation budget testimonies, our public transit system is in crisis. We need fair and equitable solutions now, not bickering," **said Senator Diane Savino (D-Staten Island/Brooklyn).**

"Clearly, the City's subway system remains in the 20th Century. It needs both, short and long term solutions to its problems. Subway riders deserve and expect a reliable system. And as we look for permanent funding for our transit system, a shared financing system is a logical step to prevent not just summers of hell, but years of chaos. It is crucial we invest a portion of the city sales tax to modernize the subway and give straphangers a system they can count on," **said Senator Jose Peralta (D-Queens).**

"Anyone who has been an MTA customer in the five boroughs over the last few years can tell you that our City's subway system is crumbling. We need to fully fund repairs immediately before the problems get worse. We need the City of New York to match the State's \$428 million dollar funding commitment in order to provide much needed relief for New York City residents and business owners," **said Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens).**

"This report underscores the fact that the common-sense solutions we need to tackle the failings of our subway system have broad public support. The maintenance, reliability, safety, and other key Phase 1 initiatives require the State and the City to work in partnership. The millions of subway riders who depend on this critical pillar of mass transit are counting on us to act," **said Senator Jesse Hamilton (D-Brooklyn).**

"The MTA is in crisis, and as the representative of a district that relies on mass transit, I firmly believe that New York City and New York State leaders need to work together to find solutions to this crisis. The steps already taken by new NYCT chief Andy Byford and by MTA

head Joe Lhota have begun to bear fruit, but we need to continue to invest in the system to prevent its decay and collapse," **said Senator Marisol Alcantara (D-Manhattan).**