



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Senator Mayer Urges the MTA Not to Increase Fares and Work to Rebuild Commuter Volume & Restore Confidence

SHELLEY B. MAYER December 14, 2020

| ISSUE: [MTA](#), [PUBLIC TRANSIT](#), [PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION](#), [METRO-NORTH](#)



Urging the MTA Not to Increase Fares & Tolls and to Work to Rebuild Commuter Volume and Restore Confidence

On Monday, December 14th, Senator Shelley B. Mayer testified at the MTA's Virtual Public Hearing on Fare and Toll Policy urging the Board to not increase fares and tolls in order to rebuild commuter ridership during a time while riders' incomes remain uncertain.

Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, “When the system’s ridership remains at record low levels and riders’ incomes remain uncertain, we must do all we can to strengthen the system by encouraging ridership, maintaining fares and restoring confidence in the safety of the system for commuters. I join many of my colleagues in calling on the MTA to identify ways to draw riders back to the system and to avoid drastic staff layoffs during this terrible economic downturn. Among other ideas, I suggest reduced prices for returning commuters, special fares for NYC northbound day trips, student discounts, and special fares for NYC visits in partnerships with NYC attractions seeking visitors.”

[Click here](#) for the schedule of public hearing dates & times as well as the proposed fare and toll policy changes.

Below is Senator Shelley Mayer’s full statement concerning the proposed MTA fare increase.

December 14, 2020

I am State Senator Shelley Mayer, representing the 37th Senate District in the Westchester suburbs. I am strongly opposed to the MTA’s proposed toll and fare increases and service cuts proposed tonight. New York’s public transportation system represents one of the largest and most significant in the world. It is the lifeblood of not only New York City but the entire region. At this moment, when the system’s ridership remains at record low levels and riders’ incomes remain uncertain or simply gone, we must do all we can to strengthen the system by encouraging ridership, maintaining fares and restoring confidence in the safety of the system. Increasing fares and tolls and laying off union workers is not the answer. It is particularly unjust given the enormous sacrifice the MTA’s employees have already made during this pandemic.

We actively support the fight to force Washington to help solve the MTA’s revenue challenge, the result of COVID-19’s devastating impact on our economy. We join with you to insist that the Senate Leadership -

particularly Leader McConnell - do their part to restore our system, but sadly we cannot turn to cuts and layoffs to solve this problem. This moment cannot sustain that approach.

As a NYS Senator representing much of Westchester, I represent a diverse district, which exemplifies the treasure and indispensability of our transportation system. In my district, there are residents who rely on the Metro-North, subways and Bee-Line buses as their only form of transportation to get to work, buy groceries, and go to school.

I stress the importance of working creatively and innovatively to avoid fare increases and service cuts that will drive ridership away from the system at the very moment we most need to draw riders back to the system. I join many of my colleagues in calling on the MTA to identify ways to draw riders back to the system and to avoid drastic staff and union layoffs. Among other ideas, I suggest reduced prices for returning commuters, special fares for NYC northbound day trips, student discounts, and special fares for NYC visits in partnerships with attractions seeking visitors to return to NYC.

Finally, I suggest that MTA board members who promised to be responsive to the Senate which confirmed them must do better in reaching out for creative ideas and input. We are deeply involved in the lives of our communities and can bring new ideas and input to your discussions. To that end, we will continue to do our part to press for essential funding from Washington (as we have before), but the MTA must do its part to rebuild and sustain ridership, which will contribute to a rebuilding of its finances and confidence in the system.