



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## Fare Hike Off For Now, Riders, Workers, Elected Leaders Demand Governor Keep Fares Low, Stop Service Cuts, Solve MTA's Fiscal Crisis

MICHAEL GIANARIS January 19, 2021

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At a rally, transit riders, union members and elected officials, demanded Governor Cuomo meet transit funding needs without ding essential workers or cutting buses and subways and stop raids on MTA dedicated funds. Speakers urged the governor to permanently cancel this year's fare hike and instead solve the MTA's financial problems with progressive measures like the Invest In Our New York Act.

"When riders organize, our governor listens. Momentum is building not just to postpone but to cancel this year's regressive fare hike on essential workers and New Yorkers with no other way to get around besides buses, subways, and paratransit. With the fare hike off the table for now, Governor Cuomo must also stop state raids on transit-dedicated funds. As riders breathe a sigh of relief today, the governor must craft a bold, progressive path forward for public transit funding," **said Riders Alliance Organizing Manager Stephanie Burgos-Veras.**

"Millions of New Yorkers ride our subways and buses each day - especially the working class New Yorkers, immigrants, and people of color who don't have access to a car, and many who serve as essential workers. These New Yorkers have had to endure slower service and poorer transportation quality because of the MTA's budget cuts. But while millions of New Yorkers are struggling during Covid-19, the wealthiest New Yorkers have grown richer during this pandemic. The solution is simple: Gov. Cuomo can protect New York by cancelling his unfair hike, and instead end tax breaks on the wealthiest New Yorkers," **said Rebecca Bailin, Campaign Manager, Invest in Our New York.**

"A fare increase is a regressive tax on the poor and essential workers. With federal aid on the horizon, now is not the moment to rebuild the MTA on the backs of everyday riders. With Washington's allyship and the courage to raise taxes on the ultrarich and corporations in our state, we can save the MTA and keep it affordable for the New Yorkers that rely on it," **said Assembly Member Harvey Epstein.**

Earlier Tuesday, **Senate Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris** wrote to Governor Cuomo along similar lines: "Raising fares in exchange for decreasing dedicated state funding shifts the burden for our current economic crisis onto transit riders in order to help solve the state's larger budget problems," Gianaris's letter reads. "The last thing we should be doing at

this critical time is increasing the obligations of working people as we navigate our way through this unprecedented hardship.”

Members and leaders of the Riders Alliance, Transport Workers Union Local 100, New York Communities for Change, Democratic Socialists of America, Sunrise Movement, Empire State Indivisible, Invest In Our New York, and other progressive organizations were joined by members of the state legislature and City Council. Together, they demanded Governor Cuomo hold fares and service steady, end raids on MTA dedicated funds, and balance his transit budget with progressive revenue raisers instead.