



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mario R. Mattera

Senate Minority Conference Requests Forensic Audit Of MTA To Be Conducted By Comptroller DiNapoli

MARIO R. MATTERA March 10, 2023

| ISSUE: MTA (METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY), LIRR, COMPTROLLER AUDIT, NYS COMPTROLLER DINAPOLI, PROTECTING COMMUTERS



Senator Mario R. Mattera (2nd Senate District) joined with his colleagues in the New York State Senate Republican Conference today announced that have sent a [letter](#) to the Office of NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli requesting a forensic audit of the MTA to identify what wrongful actions led to the corporation's fiscal crisis and determine what steps can be implemented to close its \$600 million annual budget shortfall without turning to the taxpayers as a last resort.

The [letter](#) follows weeks of havoc engulfing the MTA. Commuters have become increasingly frustrated with scheduling problems, frenzied transfers, packed trains and increased fares.

“It is vitally important to ensure that there is complete transparency and openness pertaining to this issue. Whether it is the MTA Payroll Tax or congestion pricing, enough is enough. The MTA needs to exhibit some fiscal responsibility and get its own financial house in order before asking for the taxpayers of our state to bail them out,” **the Senators wrote.**

Last year, it is estimated that the MTA lost over a half billion dollars as a result of riders not paying their fares, a loss that could have been avoided with efforts to install head to foot turnstiles. Exploring any and all alternatives to a tax or fare increase should take priority in addressing this issue.

“We look forward to your prompt attention to our request for a forensic audit of the MTA so we can ensure they are following best practices and prudent financial management. Please provide a timeframe for the completion of this audit so a thorough review of all options can be explored,” **the Senators concluded in the letter.**

“At a time when the MTA is requesting more state funding and advocating for increased fares and taxes, it is important that our residents have a clear and independent examination of the authority’s books. While I am appreciative of the MTA’s willingness to discuss issues with my office, an audit by Comptroller DiNapoli will provide all of our taxpayers and commuters with a transparent view of their finances so they know their money is being safeguarded. That way we can proceed forward with a clear understanding of their reality and work together to solve the problems New York travelers face,” **said Senator Mario R. Mattera, a member of the Senate Standing Committee on Transportation.**

“There is frustration all around with the MTA, from a lack of fare enforcement, to overcrowded cars, to schedule changes that cause chaos and confusion for commuters. New Yorkers should not have to pay for the fiscal mismanagement of the MTA. If this issue remains unaddressed, it will result in a year after year snowball effect and continuous tax and fee increases dropped on commuters and taxpayers. Instead, the cause of this enormous budget shortfall should be dissected piece by piece to ensure transparency, openness, and proper solutions to fix the problem once and for all,” **said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.**

“Whether it is the MTA Payroll Tax or congestion pricing, enough is enough. The MTA needs to exhibit some fiscal responsibility and get its own financial house in order before asking for the taxpayers of our state to bail them out. At this point, turning to the taxpayers should be a last resort, not a first option,” **said Senator Dean Murray, 3rd District.**

“When it comes to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority’s financial position, the people of Long Island deserve clarity and transparency. At a time when the MTA is cutting services, and trying to raise taxes, New Yorkers should know exactly how their funding is being spent. An independent audit by Comptroller DiNapoli would shed much needed light on the MTA’s financial practices,” **said Senator Jack Martins SD 7th.**

“The MTA has a long and sordid history of financial instability that has required the people of New York State to bail them out more than once. In addition, despite receiving the MTA payroll tax - which directly burdens the business of the 9th District and Nassau at large - they simply can’t figure out how to operate solvently. Their financial mismanagement, coupled with disastrous service changes that have inconvenienced commuters across Long Island, necessitates the request we make today: there must be a full audit of the MTA so that we can understand why they continue to fail our residents and push them to do better,” **said Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, SD 9th.**

“The MTA continues to neglect its transportation responsibilities on Long Island, while at the same time, requesting new and higher taxes be placed on Long Island taxpayers, motorists and businesses. Our conference believes this failure is a direct result of gross mismanagement at the authority. To improve mass transit for Long Island residents, we urge the State Comptroller to conduct a forensic audit as a first and needed step in turning the MTA around,” **said Senator Anthony Palumbo, SD 1st.**

“Time and again Long Islanders are being told by this Governor that we have to bail out an MTA notorious for service cuts, safety concerns, scheduling issues and fiscal mismanagement. We deserve better. The MTA has lost public trust and they must be held accountable. The forensic audit we are demanding will help uncover the waste and abuse that plagues this agency and continues to rob commuters of the competent, efficient and safe transportation they deserve. Why don’t we stop the Hochul payroll taxes, congestion pricing or whatever the next gimmick will be and actually clean up the MTA? My constituents have had enough, we need a forensic audit now,” **said Senator Steven Rhoads, SD 5th.**

"It is time for a forensic audit of the MTA. Before we burden the commuters and taxpayers further, we must take a close look at reforming an authority that is plagued with inefficiencies, fraud, and mismanagement. This is the reason we are calling for an extensive audit of the entire system. The answer cannot just be increasing taxes, rider fares and the cost of tolls. Congestion pricing, another hefty lift for the MTA, another tax for New Yorkers - at what point have we paid enough?" **stated Senator Alexis Weik, SD 8th.**