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**THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK**



**DEAN MURRAY**  
SENATOR, 3<sup>RD</sup> DISTRICT

Ranking Minority Member  
Commerce, Economic  
Development and Small Business  
Libraries  
Social Services

Committees  
Codes  
Crime Victims, Crime and  
Correction  
Higher Education

Member  
Joint Senate Task Force on  
Opioids, Addiction and Overdose  
Prevention

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Executive Chamber  
NYS Capital  
Albany, NY 12224

The Honorable Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
NYS Senate Majority Leader  
NYS Capital  
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Carl Heastie  
Speaker of the Assembly  
NYS Capital  
Albany, NY 12248

February 4, 2025

Dear Governor Hochul, Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and Speaker Heastie,

Year after year we hear the same broken record... "the MTA is facing a fiscal crisis and needs more money." Then, year after year, Albany introduces a new revenue source by reaching into the pockets of hard-working New Yorkers to keep the MTA solvent. Once again, it appears the same old song is playing, with the MTA claiming that they are facing a \$33-Billion shortfall in their capital plan. At this point, turning to the taxpayers should be a last resort, not a first option and a return to a full MTA payroll tax should not be an option at all. Instead, as a matter of fiscal integrity, we strongly urge you to take two initial steps: First, conduct a forensic audit of the MTA, and second, appoint a Financial Control Board to take control of the MTA's finances to close their annual budget shortfalls.

These two measures alone could go a long way toward reducing, or possibly even eliminating, the need for any new revenue sources for the MTA. In reviewing previous audits that have been conducted, the Comptroller's Office has continually uncovered cases of either waste, fraud or mismanagement that has ultimately cost the taxpayers millions of dollars. We can no longer turn a blind eye year after year to the need for fundamental fiscal reform and accountability. We strongly believe that before looking for new revenue streams, there must first be proper fiscal management practices imposed on the MTA.

For example, let us take the issue of money lost through fare and toll evasion. The amount lost has been steadily and rapidly increasing over the last several years. This increase has reached a point where last year, it is estimated that the MTA lost over \$750 Million dollars. Addressing this problem alone will save billions over the life of a Five-Year Plan.

This is just one of many examples of actions that a forensic audit and Financial Control Board can uncover to recapture and maximize revenue and savings from sources that are already in place, not to mention the unrealized dedicated revenue streams to fund the MTA through casino expansion. These actions alone may reveal that there is no need for any new dedicated revenue streams. However, let us be very clear, at no time ever, should any consideration be given to re-implementing a new MTA payroll tax.

Sincerely,



Dean Murray  
State Senator



Andrew Lanza  
State Senator



George Borrello  
State Senator



Stephen T. Chan  
State Senator



Jack M. Martins  
State Senator



Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick  
State Senator



Mario Mattered  
State Senator



Peter Oberacker  
State Senator



Anthony Palumbo  
State Senator



Stephen Rhoads  
State Senator



Rob Rolison  
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Mark Walczyk  
State Senator



Bill Weber  
State Senator



Alexis Weik  
State Senator