

# NEW YORKERS FOR BETTER PUBLIC TRANSIT

March 13, 2019

Governor Andrew Cuomo  
Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
Speaker Carl Heastie

This is a critical time for transit customers across New York State and we urge you to include the highest level of long-term, sustainable transit funding in the final 2019-20 state budget. Our state must invest in a robust transit network so that systems can improve mobility and support economic growth.

The MTA's funding crisis coupled with the need to grow essential transit service in communities throughout the state requires bold action. The Governor has led the way by proposing a congestion tolling program for the MTA along with revenues from the internet sales tax and cannabis tax to increase funding for the MTA. We applaud this effort.

The Governor's proposals are great first steps, but ensuring progress towards modern, reliable transit systems that New Yorkers need requires a statewide commitment. This proposal should be expanded to include revenue from the non-New York City portion of any statewide internet sales tax and cannabis tax to increase transit investment across the state. This should be paired with a statewide expansion of the supplemental surcharge on auto rentals (as proposed in the Executive Budget) and a \$1.00 per ride fee on Transportation Network Companies outside the Manhattan congestion zone.

The final 2019-20 budget must build on the Governor's funding initiatives to produce a statewide solution that benefits all transit riders, meets growing demand for service, and supports economic growth for all regions of the state.

Congestion pricing is essential to help fund the next MTA capital program and to relieve traffic congestion that is choking Manhattan. Additional resources will be required to address the MTA's long-term capital and operating needs, including funding a significant portion of the Fast Forward Plan. New resources must be balanced with reforms and organizational improvements to ensure success.

For transit systems in upstate New York and the downstate suburbs, a long-term funding commitment is long overdue. A 50% increase in state operating assistance over five years (with a 10% increase in 2019-20) will allow transit agencies to offer frequent, high quality service, and support state efforts to ensure access to jobs, education and healthcare. It will also revitalize downtowns, promote economic development and reduce poverty. Increased capital funding will allow progress on improving transit infrastructure.

The time for action is now. Any delay in addressing transit funding shortfalls will lead to worsening service to the public, increased costs and lost opportunities for communities of all sizes across the state.

Thank you for your leadership and support of New York's transit riders. Let us know how we can help.

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Sincerely,

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