

**CITIZENS FOR REGIONAL TRANSIT
COALITION FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE
EMPIRE STATE FUTURE
GREEN OPTIONS BUFFALO
NEW YORK TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ALLIANCE
PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC GOOD
PUSH BUFFALO
TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN
VOICE BUFFALO**

CONTACT:

Gladys Gifford
Citizens for Regional Transit
716-836-2825

Nadine Lemmon
New York State Transportation Equity Alliance/
Tri-State Transportation Campaign
917-767-7698

**STATEMENT ON STATE FUNDING FOR TRANSIT
December 14, 2011**

We are stunned by the recently-announced service reductions planned for Buffalo's transit system. A 22% reduction in service miles will undermine all other efforts to spur economic development in our region—even if we create jobs, people won't be able to get to them.

We cannot avoid service cuts simply by raising fares. Since 2003, there has already been a 40% increase in Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority's (NFTA) fares, and now, because of Albany's cuts, there is a \$7.1 million budget shortfall and projected deficits through 2015. 22% fewer service miles will cripple the system.

For many of us that ride NFTA, public transportation isn't a choice: 30% of Buffalo's families don't own cars and the city has the third highest poverty rate in the country. Especially during these tough economic times—ridership is up 18% since 2006—further cuts to the system will disproportionately affect those who can least afford it: low-income communities, communities of color, aging residents, and those who are just trying to get to work.

Transit funding isn't just a problem for Buffalo. This week, it's our city, but next week, it could be Syracuse, Albany, Binghamton, or Rochester. Governor Cuomo, legislators: stand up for economic development by standing up for public transportation. If we want growth, Albany has to invest in the circulatory systems of New York's cities.