



The Empire State Transportation Alliance (ESTA) applauds Governor Cuomo and the New York State legislature for their commitment to ensuring that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has the resources necessary to operate, maintain, and expand the transportation network that underpins the economy of the New York metropolitan region.

Yesterday's agreement on MTA's capital program includes a New York State contribution of \$770 million for MTA capital projects in the 2012-2014 timeframe as well as approval of a \$7 billion increase in MTA's bond cap. Bond-cap increases have historically accompanied approval of each capital program. While ESTA has always preferred new funding streams for the MTA capital program over new borrowing by the agency, we support MTA's proposed 2012-2014 Capital Program Amendment as the only available means for continuing essential capital investments that must not be abandoned.

RPA president and ESTA co-chairman Robert Yaro said: "This historic investment in the MTA will not only transform the metro area transit system, but be an investment in the economic backbone of our entire economy. This agreement included as part of the budget will create thousands of jobs and ensure the future vitality of the regional economy. Governor Cuomo has shown exceptional leadership in brokering this agreement that will solve the greatest challenge facing the MTA."

ESTA also thanks the many legislators who contributed to this vitally important agreement.

ESTA co-chairman Kevin Corbett said: "ESTA looks forward to working with the governor, legislators, and the New York congressional delegation in obtaining \$2.2 billion from the federal government through the Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing program—a key component of the Capital Program just agreed to. This RRIF loan will enable completion of the East Side Access project to bring Long Island Rail Road service into Grand Central Terminal."

"This news from Albany is a shot in the arm for New York's economy, both downstate and upstate," said Kate Slevin, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. "Transit riders, workers and manufacturers can breathe a sigh of relief knowing that, for at least the next few years, their transit system won't come to a screeching halt."

"Mass transit is critical for the environment and economy--and not just in New York City, but across the metro region and all of New York State," said Marcia Bystryn, president of the New York League of Conservation Voters. "We applaud Governor Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Silver, and Senate Majority Leader Skelos for standing up for mass transit. Their bipartisan agreement also sends a strong signal to Washington that sound transportation investments are good for all Americans, regardless of their political party affiliation."

"The General Contractors Association of New York applauds Governor Cuomo's leadership in setting forth a funding plan for the next three years of the MTA capital program," said Denise Richardson, managing director of the General Contractors Association of New York. "Governor Cuomo, Majority Leader Skelos and Speaker Silver, in reaching this budget deal, recognize that funding the MTA is not a downstate issue; it is New York State issue. The thousands of manufacturing and construction jobs throughout New York that are supported by investments from the MTA capital program, along with the critical mobility provided by the largest commuter rail and

transit network in the country, demonstrates that the MTA is the catalyst of New York's economic engine."

NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign Senior Attorney Gene Russianoff said: "This gives the go ahead to vital projects that mean reliable service, such as bus and subway car purchases, subway station fix-ups and track and signal overhauls."

Now that the 2010-2014 Capital Program is funded, ESTA urges that planning for the next five-year capital program (2015-2019) begin immediately. Innovative approaches are needed to ensure that the MTA's debt load will begin decreasing in 2018.

ESTA is a broad-based coalition of business, civic, and labor groups that undertakes research and advocacy in support of capital investment in New York State's transportation infrastructure, notably the five-year capital programs of the MTA.