



For Immediate Release

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Subway Ridership Numbers Could Be Bad News if Transit Investments Are Neglected

Statement of Tri-State Transportation Campaign Executive Director Veronica Vanterpool on the need to fill the funding gap in the MTA Capital Program:

The New York City subway system is one of the region's most valuable assets, but with the delays and crowds that characterize the commutes of millions of daily riders, it is easy to underappreciate. Today's news that subway ridership increased by 2.6 percent in 2014 is both a significant milestone celebrating the progress and popularity of the system over the decades, but potentially a harbinger of bad news if more investment is not made in the system.

The plan that outlines such investments, the 2015-2019 MTA capital program, has a \$14 billion gap. The improvements that reduce delays and crowds are on the chopping block as a result.

As legislators return to session in Albany this week, addressing this gap must be one of their top priorities. This plan outlines the train, track, signal, technology, bus, and station projects that will mitigate delays, crowds and deteriorating service across the entire MTA system. Riders should find a champion in Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie; ridership on the 2 and 5 trains in the speaker's Bronx district grew by 3.7 percent in 2014.

We also encourage New York City to increase its contribution to the five year capital program in the city's upcoming capital budget. If these additional investments are not made, instead of celebrating how far our transit system has evolved over the past 30 years, we will be lamenting the demise of a city whose most valuable asset was neglected.

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut.