



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 7, 2015

Contacts: John Raskin, Riders Alliance (646-369-8093); Gene Russianoff, Straphangers Campaign (917-575-9434), Veronica Vanterpool, Tri-State Transportation Campaign (917-957-9748); Paul Steely White, Transportation Alternatives (212-629-8080); Joan Byron, Pratt Center (718-636-3468)

Riders Weigh In: What Governor Cuomo and Mayor de Blasio Must Do to Seal the Deal on MTA Capital Funding

Statement from Riders Alliance, NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Transportation Alternatives, and Pratt Center for Community Development

It's been more than a year since the MTA first submitted its proposal for a vital, five-year capital program to rebuild our region's unparalleled transit system. The delays in adopting a plan have been frustrating, like a long wait for a train too packed to get on.

As transit advocates, we now write to express our hope that despite the occasional stormy New York moment, we are close to fully funding the MTA's plan, a \$26.8 billion program which would make vital investments in the future of our subways, buses and regional commuter rail.

We can chart the progress in recent weeks:

- In late July, Governor Cuomo committed \$8.3 billion in State funds. He later indicated that his plan would not require the MTA to take on additional unsupported debt that could translate into fare hikes and service cuts for riders.
- News reports indicate that Mayor de Blasio has offered to increase the City's commitment to the five-year capital program beyond its originally planned \$657 million. Our groups have long called on City administrations to provide greater funding of MTA capital needs.

The Governor and Mayor should move expeditiously to resolve a number of key related matters.

We urge Governor Cuomo to add detail to his \$8.3 billion commitment of State funds, including information about the timing of payments, the balance of cash and financing, and the source of proposed funds. Governor Cuomo should also commit that money the State contributes with

one hand won't be removed with the other through the ongoing practice of raiding dedicated transit funds. A new State commitment cannot come from funds that are otherwise dedicated to public transportation—doing so could lead to fare increases and service cuts for riders.

We urge Mayor de Blasio to significantly increase the City's proposed contribution to the MTA capital program. The City is a significant beneficiary of service the MTA provides, and the City contribution to the MTA's five-year capital program has not substantially increased since the 1980s, losing hundreds of millions of dollars in annual value as it fails to keep pace with inflation. Mayor de Blasio should also detail the source, timing and makeup of the City's contribution, so the public can hold the City to its commitment.

Our groups believe New York is close to an agreement that will fully fund the MTA's vital five-year capital investment plan. With such a narrow remaining gap to fill, we are optimistic that our elected leaders can come together to choose fair, sufficient and lasting sources of funding that support a new generation of transit service in the region. Failing to do so would be an unacceptable outcome for the nine million New Yorkers who rely on subway, bus and commuter rail service every day.