



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign Statement on MTA's Proposed Fare Increase

*Today, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) held a public hearing on proposed changes to fares, crossing charges (tolls), and related policies. Without more federal funding, the MTA will be forced to move forward with a [plan](#) to increase fares, eliminate popular fare payment options, and adopt variable price tolling. In response, **Felicia Park-Rogers, Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects for Tri-State Transportation Campaign**, released the following statement:*

“Raising fares and eliminating popular fare payment options will push more people away from public transit and, coupled with sweeping service cuts, will create the perfect scenario for a long-term revenue spiral. Many will ask themselves, ‘why pay more for worse service?’ Those who can afford to will drive instead, contributing to worsening traffic congestion and toxic air pollution.

“There are many New Yorkers, however, who cannot afford to drive and will continue to rely on public transit. These individuals, many of whom are the very essential workers who saved this city from the worst of the pandemic, do not deserve to carry the full weight of Washington’s failure on their backs.

“We continue to call on the White House and Republican Senate to pass desperately needed funds for public transit during the lame duck session of Congress. If Republicans only move forward with a so-called ‘skinny stimulus,’ we call on them to include transit funds as part of COVID relief immediately.”

Below are public comments offered by Felicia Park-Rogers, Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects, at the MTA public hearing on December 14, 2020:

“Good evening. My name is Felicia Park-Rogers. I am the Director of Regional Infrastructure Projects for Tri-State Transportation Campaign, a regional advocacy and policy organization working to reduce congestion, pollution, and to improve commutes.



“As we are in the midst of the holiday season, first of all I would like to express my deepest condolences to all of the families members and friends of MTA workers who died this year due to COVID-19.

“In these unprecedented times the Board is facing an impossible set of choices as you confront the incomprehensible budget gap left in the wake of significantly reduced revenue from the farebox, taxes, and tolls. The alarm bells are ringing; the transit crisis in New York City is getting worse with each day that passes without a new round of federal stimulus dollars. We call on Congress, and particularly the Senate, to stop its politicization of emergency relief funds for our nation and to immediately pass a proposal that includes meaningful aid for transit, including billions for the MTA.

“Even as the system is facing tremendous crisis we ask the Board to please delay the implementation of previously scheduled fare hikes due to be enacted in 2021. Raising fares at this time, in combination with deep service cuts, will set the MTA on a death spiral of lower ridership, further reduced farebox revenue, slowing our region’s economic recovery, and putting tremendous stress on our region’s most vulnerable residents at further risk and having a disproportionately negative impact on Black and brown commuters, essential and frontline workers who heavily depend on public transit.

“As currently proposed the fare increase would raise approximately \$148 million dollars for FY 2021. In normal times, this would be a helpful amount of revenue. But in the face of an estimated budget gap of \$6 billion, fare increases at this time will barely help the yawning deficit and instead will terribly impact the people who need the transit system the most. The people who are currently riding are not high-wage workers, they cannot afford even these modest fare hikes during this time. For this reason we also ask the MTA Board to not raise single-use fares and to keep the seven-day and 30-day passes as they are. Essential workers need them.

“We strongly support your proposals to raise tolls and implement variable price tolling as a means of raising funds as well as a means of discouraging car congestion. More cars on the road will have many damaging consequences; paralyzing traffic congestion, increasing greenhouse gas emissions and toxic pollutants, and more traffic-related deaths.

“Thank you for your leadership during these incredibly difficult times.”

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Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a 27-year old advocacy organization that fights for an equitable, safe, multi-modal transportation network that provides options and supports the economies of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. TSTC works to fix our commutes, meet our climate goals, stop traffic deaths, and make transportation fair.