



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senators Fuschillo and Flanagan Call for Hearings on Governor's Mta Nominee

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. July 20, 2009

Senator Charles Fuschillo (R, Merrick) and Senator John Flanagan (R-C-I, East Northport) today called for the Senate to conduct expedited public hearings on Jay Walder, the Governor's nominee to chair the Metropolitan Transit Authority.

"The MTA plays a vital role in the lives of many of our constituents who ride on trains, buses and subways every day and right now this massive entity is without leadership," Senator Fuschillo, a member of the MTA Capital Review and Planning Board, said. "We should not delay the process of holding hearings to find out what Mr. Walder's plans are for the future of the MTA, or his opinions on controversial issues such as the payroll tax and fare hikes that the Democrats pushed through to bail out the MTA, as well as the LIRR's proposed third track plan."

Walder, former transit leader in London, was nominated by Governor Paterson to chair the MTA earlier this month. To date, no hearings have been scheduled to give Senators an opportunity to question Walder. "From the northern Hudson Valley suburbs to Nassau and Suffolk, businesses and taxpayers are angry about the devastating impact of the MTA 'job' tax," Senator Flanagan, a member of the MTA Capital Review and Planning Board, said. "We need to sit down with Mr. Walder so we can ask him very directly what he plans to do to get the MTA back on sound financial footing, to improve MTA service, restore accountability and, hopefully, roll back the payroll tax."

Senator Fuschillo, ranking Republican on the Senate Transportation Committee, said the hearing should be held as soon as possible so the full Senate could vote on Walder's nomination when the session is reconvened.

"There are too many serious questions about the MTA to let this nomination sit without hearings or action," Senator Fuschillo said. "I urge the chairs of the Senate Finance and Transportation Committees to schedule hearings as soon as possible to get this process moving so we can determine if Mr. Walder is the right individual to lead the MTA or not."