



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senator Fuschillo's Legislation to Raise Fines for Subway Fare-Beaters Passed by Senate

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. January 23, 2012

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) today announced that the New York State Senate has passed legislation he sponsors to raise the fines for those who attempt to avoid paying fares on New York City subways.

The legislation would allow the MTA to raise the current maximum fine for fare-evasion which is so low that it is often cheaper than paying the fare itself.

"The MTA and its fare-paying riders shouldn't have to spend tens of millions of dollars more each year paying for other people's illegal free rides. At a time when every dollar counts, the MTA needs stronger tools to discourage fare-evasion. Higher fines would create a stronger deterrent and remove the incentive which actually encourages people to try and beat the system. I'm pleased that the Senate has passed this legislation and I urge the Assembly to join us," said Senator Fuschillo, Chairman of the Senate's Transportation Committee.

Current law allows the MTA to impose a maximum \$100 fine for fare evasion, with an additional \$50 penalty if the person does not pay the fine or respond to the summons. Not only are these penalties an inadequate deterrent, they actually encourage individuals to try and beat the system because the fine is often cheaper than paying the fare itself.

According to the Daily News, a report issued by the MTA's subway division noted that 18.5 million people entered the New York City subway system without paying in 2009, an average of over 50,000 a day. These fare evasions cost the MTA over \$31 million in revenue. The report estimated that a routine offender could expect to get a \$100 citation once every six to 13 weeks, which is actually cheaper than spending the \$162 it costs to buy six weekly metrocards.

Senator Fuschillo's legislation (S5870) would allow the MTA to raise the maximum fare evasion fine to \$500. This would remove the financial incentive for trying to evade the fare. The legislation would also raise the penalty for failing to pay the fine from \$50 to \$100.

Senator Fuschillo worked with both the MTA and NYPD in drafting the legislation. The New York City Council also passed a resolution supporting Senator Fuschillo's legislation and calling for it to be passed and signed into law.