



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

Senate Passes Senator Fuschillo's Legislation to Raise Fines for Fare-Beaters

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Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) today announced that the New York State Senate passed legislation he sponsored to raise the fines for fare evasion on New York City Transit. 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.

"Fare-beaters steal tens of millions of dollars in free rides from the MTA each year, and law abiding riders are the ones who are ultimately paying the costs. Higher fines are needed to create a stronger deterrent from fare evasion and ensure that fare-beaters pay a higher price for trying to avoid paying their fare share," 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. The maximum fine has not been raised since 1985, despite inflation and changing fare costs since that time. As a result, the current maximum fine is not only an inadequate deterrent, it actually encourages individuals to try and beat the system because paying the fine is often cheaper than paying the fare itself.

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 purchasing six weekly metrocards.

Senator Fuschillo's legislation (S756) would allow the MTA to raise the maximum fare evasion fine from \$100 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 previously passed a resolution supporting Senator Fuschillo's legislation and calling for it to be passed and signed into law.