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(not speaking)  
Submitted

Testimony of  
**The New York Public Transit Association, Inc.**

At the Joint Hearing of the  
Senate Standing Committee on Finance  
&  
Assembly Standing Committee on Ways and Means  
Concerning the Executive Budget Proposal Relating to Transportation

Albany, NY

Thursday, January 26 2012

10:00 PM

Hearing Room B

Thank you, Chairman Farrell and Chairman DeFrancisco, for providing the New York Public Transit Association the opportunity to testify before this joint session of the Senate Finance Committee and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee regarding Governor Andrew Cuomo's proposed Executive Budget.

My name is Carm Basile, and I am the President of the New York Public Transit Association, a not-for-profit association representing the public transit industry throughout the State. Our members include public transit providers, private sector manufacturers and suppliers, state agencies, and community advocates. Our goal is to ensure that transit riders have access to safe and reliable mobility options through the State. Our transit systems provide over two billion rides on buses and rail annually.

Transit providers are a key contributor to New York's State's financial health, with 70% of all mass transit trips taking residents to and from work. Transit dollars provide a multiplier effect in New York's economy with operating aid providing an economic multiplier of 3.2 for every dollar invested.

Over the last decade, public transportation service has steadily grown in New York State, getting people to work, helping those on welfare gain access to jobs, contributing to energy conservation by taking cars off the roads and creating reliable, efficient mobility options. Conversely, state transit funding for most systems has either remained stagnant or has been reduced or delayed as the result of deficit reduction actions. Governor Cuomo's proposed budget represents a welcome reversal of this troubling trend.

NYPTA supports the Executive Budget submitted by Governor Cuomo which recommends state transit operating assistance (STOA) appropriations totaling \$4.43 billion, including nearly \$4.0 billion for the MTA and \$436.7 million for other transit systems. This is an increase of over \$190 million for the MTA and \$29.6 million for non-MTA systems from the enacted FYE 12 budget. This is the first increase of any magnitude since FYE 2009, and resources in all dedicated transportation funds are substantially appropriated.

NYPTA strongly supports the Article VII proposal to proposal to provide revenue collected and distributed from the corporate and utilities taxes imposed under Tax Law sections 183 and 184 based on population to replace the yearly transfer that has occurred from the Metropolitan Mass Transportation Operating Assistance Account to the Public Transportation Operating Assistance account. The new distribution is based upon population within the downstate and upstate service districts with fifty four percent deposited in the Mass Transportation Operating Assistance Fund to the credit of the MMTOA account and twenty-six percent deposited in the Mass Transportation Operating Assistance Fund to the credit of the PTOA account. The sharing of the tax revenue does not impact the downstate account and will diversify the upstate account by providing a second supporting revenue source.

NYPTA supports the capital program appropriations of \$18.5 million for each of two capital programs – the omnibus matching funds and the non-MTA capital fund, also known as the State Dedicated Fund (SDF). These are the same appropriations as last year. For the balance of the five year planning period through fiscal year 2017, the budget projects increased appropriations of \$42 million annually for the combined omnibus and SDF programs. NYPTA has recommended a five-year capital spending plan totaling \$470 million, an increase of \$130

million over the most recent NYSDOT capital plan proposal issued early in 2010. Regarding the MTA, NYPTA supports the \$770 million appropriation recommended from the capital projects fund to support the 2010-14 Capital Program.

Capital investment in public transportation means jobs. Not only do New York's transit systems directly employ over 60,000 people, their annual multi-billion dollar capital investment programs also produce jobs and economic impact in manufacturing and service businesses in all regions of the State. Buses are manufactured and assembled in Plattsburg; Subway and rail cars are built and rebuilt in Plattsburgh, Hornell and Yonkers; Paratransit vehicles are outfitted, sold and serviced in Dansville and Penn Yan; Transit system software is developed in Plainview and Johnson City; Vehicle air conditioning is built in Syracuse.

We applaud Governor Cuomo's strong investment in public transit systems throughout the State which will be a key component to achieving our shared goal of economic revitalization across New York. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and we look forward to working with both houses of the Legislature and the Governor's office to ensure that transit customers receive the best service possible.