

**SENATOR JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR. AND SENATE MAJORITY ANNOUNCE PLAN
TO ADDRESS
MTA OPERATING BUDGET SHORTFALL,
PREVENT DRAMATIC FARE INCREASES AND SERVICE REDUCTIONS**

(Albany, NY)- Today, Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr., along with Senate Majority Leader Malcolm A. Smith and members of the Majority Conference announced their plan to address the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) operating deficit, saving millions of straphangers from crippling fare increases and service cuts.

Facing a staggering \$1.128 billion operating deficit which threatened the daily commute for the millions of New Yorkers who rely on mass transit, the MTA proposed extensive service cuts and fare increases of up to 23% for commuters. Last year, the Ravitch Commission recommended a set of proposed solutions to the operating deficit and new methods of funding for future MTA capital plans including in part, a payroll tax of 33 cents per \$100 of payroll, a fare increase of 8% and tolls on the East River and Harlem River Bridges.

In their plan, the Senate Majority has eliminated the potential bridge tolls and proposed a new payroll tax of 25 cents per \$100 of payroll (expected to generate \$1.16 billion) and a reduced fare increase of 4% for MTA, LIRR and Metro-North (expected to generate \$117 million). Under the Senate's plan, all potential service cuts will be restored while the proposed fare increases will be cut in half and no tolls will be placed on the bridges.

"Particularly during these times of severe economic distress, it was absolutely essential that we protect working families' access to an affordable and reliable means of mass transit with an MTA recovery plan that minimizes fare hikes and prevents the loss of services and jobs," said Senator Addabbo.

Crucial to the Senate's plan are governance changes and greater measures of public oversight and transparency which would require the MTA to provide the honest accounting that New Yorkers deserve. A forensic audit of MTA finances to assure transparency over the next few months and the strengthening of State Comptroller oversight of finances and operating budgets will ensure that a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility and prudent spending practices are upheld.

I believe our State Senate Plan takes a positive step forward in the dialogue that is required for dealing with the MTA's fiscal situation. Protecting essential services, with minimum increases, while calling for an increase in spending oversight and transparency is what my constituents have been asking for", said Senator Addabbo".