

THE SENATE
STATE OF NEW YORK

CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP



SENATOR
CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO, JR.
8TH SENATE DISTRICT

COMMITTEE MEMBER
CIVIL SERVICE & PENSIONS
CODES
COMMERCE, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
& SMALL BUSINESS
CONSUMER PROTECTION
ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS
FINANCE
HEALTH
JUDICIARY

December 13, 2011

Senator Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Speaker Boehner:

As Chairman of the New York State Senate's Transportation Committee, I am writing to strongly urge you to work together to reach an agreement on extending the current \$230 a month pre-tax transit benefit for commuters.

As you know, in 2009 the federal government increased the transit benefit to \$230 a month to help individuals offset their commuting expenses. Congress extended the benefit at the end of last year so that increased benefit could continue through 2011. Another extension is needed to prevent commuters from seeing their benefit cut almost in half in 2012.

My Senate district encompasses portions of Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, and is served by the nation's largest commuter railroad, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR). Hundreds of thousands of Long Islanders use the LIRR every day to commute to New York City, with the average daily rider paying approximately \$225 a month in fares. Failing to extend this benefit will increase their already expensive commuting costs and do nothing to encourage the use of mass transit.

Additionally, the benefit provided by the internal revenue code reduces the state taxes for New York commuters. However, this state tax benefit is dependent on the federal one, meaning commuters will have both their federal and state taxes increased if the federal government does not act.

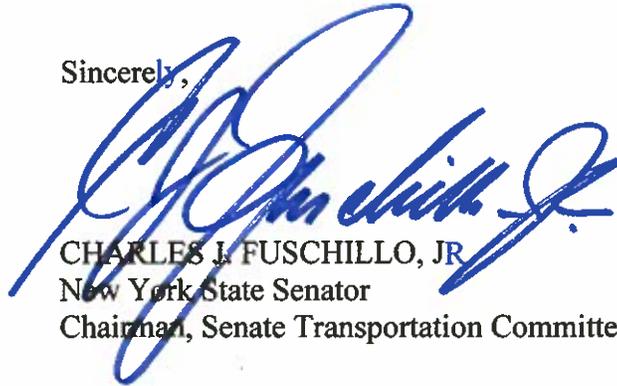


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At a time when so many family budgets are stretched to the breaking point, commuters can't afford to lose out on hundreds of dollars in tax relief. Failing to extend this benefit will hinder our economic recovery by making it more expensive for individuals just to get to work. In this economy, that's the last thing we need.

Once again, I strongly urge you to take action to prevent this important tax benefit from expiring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr.", written over the typed name and title.

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO, JR
New York State Senator
Chairman, Senate Transportation Committee

Cc: Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand