

**LEROY G. COMRIE**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT**

**ALBANY OFFICE**  
ROOM 612  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PHONE: 518-455-2701  
FAX: 518-455-2816

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
113-43 FARMERS BLVD  
ST. ALBANS, NY 11412  
PHONE: 718-454-0162  
FAX: 718-454-0186

EMAIL: [COMRIE@NYSENATE.GOV](mailto:COMRIE@NYSENATE.GOV)

WEBSITE: [COMRIE.NYSENATE.GOV](http://COMRIE.NYSENATE.GOV)



**THE SENATE**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**ALBANY**

**CHAIR**  
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES & COMMISSIONS

**COMMITTEES:**  
CITIES  
CONSUMER PROTECTION  
FINANCE  
RACING, GAMING & WAGERING  
RULES

August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear Members of the New York Congressional Delegation in the MTA Region,

We write as representatives of your constituents. As New York State Senators, we are responsible for overseeing the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which includes New York City Subways and Buses, the Long Island Rail Road, and Metro-North Railroad. The largest public transit authority in the United States, the MTA's daily ridership reached a pre-COVID-19 high of nearly nine million people.

We are also reaching out to our fellow colleagues in our neighboring states of New Jersey and Connecticut to build a coalition and urge them to write similar letters to their congressional delegations. It is critical we work together to build momentum to include emergency relief funding for transit in the next COVID relief bill, given the vital economic, social, and environmental importance of the public transportation industry.

In recent years, we have voted repeatedly to create new funding streams at the state level to support the operations and growth of MTA services, without which the region would collapse. Now, however, those resources are outmatched by the devastation of the ongoing pandemic. We therefore turn to you for aid and request your support in moving forward a new emergency funding package that includes \$32-36 billion nationally for transit; of that, \$10.4 billion would fund the MTA through 2021, with \$3.9 billion to carry the MTA through the end of 2020. The alternative is bleak: deep service cuts or exorbitant fare hikes – none of which the region – or riders – can afford.

The COVID-19 emergency is unprecedented in our lifetimes. We agree with Governor Cuomo's assessment that "(New York) government cannot meet this crisis without the capacity of the federal government."

The New York region supplies almost 10% of the GDP, and the MTA is the essential engine that drives the region. A robust federal aid package should ensure the MTA can continue to operate at full capacity while supporting all those who worked through the pandemic to save lives and all those now returning to work – and life – as the New York City region and New York State reopen safely following this unprecedented event.

We recognize that there are many requests for federal aid, but we emphasize that the region cannot fully recover without a fully functioning MTA. Public transit is the lifeblood of our city and the entire tri-state region. Affordable, reliable transit is also essential to lifting up the most vulnerable New Yorkers who use it to access jobs, education, medical appointments, and other opportunities.

Even as institutions reopen and ridership improves, the MTA's finances will still be severely impacted by a sharp reduction in dedicated tax revenue caused by the damage to the regional economy from the COVID-19 emergency: the MTA estimates its losses to total \$10.4B through 2021. Through the end of this year alone,

**LEROY G. COMRIE**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT**

**ALBANY OFFICE**  
ROOM 612  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PHONE: 518-455-2701  
FAX: 518-455-2816

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
113-43 FARMERS BLVD  
ST. ALBANS, NY 11412  
PHONE: 718-454-0162  
FAX: 718-454-0186

EMAIL: [COMRIE@NYSenate.GOV](mailto:COMRIE@NYSenate.GOV)

WEBSITE: [COMRIE.NYSenate.GOV](http://COMRIE.NYSenate.GOV)



**THE SENATE**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**ALBANY**

**CHAIR**  
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES & COMMISSIONS

**COMMITTEES:**  
CITIES  
CONSUMER PROTECTION  
FINANCE  
RACING, GAMING & WAGERING  
RULES

New York State Governor Cuomo anticipates a \$13 billion deficit, and New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer has projected city tax revenue losses of at least \$9 billion. While New York City and New York State have each allocated \$3 billion for the MTA's 2020-24 capital program, neither will be in a position to provide additional aid to the MTA. The uncertainty of federal funding means that critical construction projects could remain on hold if capital construction funds are flexed to pay for operations. While none of us like that scenario, we understand the necessity of maintaining regular service to safely transport the growing number of riders returning to the system, as the economy reopens.

Strong public transit is also essential to the region's and the nation's economic recovery and to the nation's efforts to address climate change. We cannot afford to see it decline when we must be encouraging mass transit ridership. The nation's largest public transit system must be protected, and its critical needs should be treated with utmost urgency.

Thank you for your leadership during this crisis.

Yours In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leroy Comrie".

Leroy Comrie  
District 14 | Queens  
Chair Committee On  
Corporations, Authorities & Commissions

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy M. Kennedy".

Timothy M. Kennedy  
District 63 | Buffalo  
Chair Committee On Transportation

This letter is proudly co-authored and signed by the following 12 Senators:

Senator Joe Addabbo  
Senator Andrew Gounardes  
Senator Robert Jackson  
Senator James Sanders, Jr.

Senator Jim Gaughran  
Senator Brad Hoylman  
Senator Roxanne J. Persaud  
Senator Toby A. Stavisky

Senator Monica R. Martinez  
Senator Liz Krueger  
Senator James Skoufis  
Senator Brian P. Kavanagh

**LEROY G. COMRIE**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SENATE DISTRICT**

**ALBANY OFFICE**  
ROOM 612  
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247  
PHONE: 518-455-2701  
FAX: 518-455-2816

**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
113-43 FARMERS BLVD  
ST. ALBANS, NY 11412  
PHONE: 718-454-0162  
FAX: 718-454-0186

EMAIL: [COMRIE@NYSENATE.GOV](mailto:COMRIE@NYSENATE.GOV)

WEBSITE: [COMRIE.NYSENATE.GOV](http://COMRIE.NYSENATE.GOV)



**THE SENATE**  
**STATE OF NEW YORK**  
**ALBANY**

**CHAIR**  
CORPORATIONS, AUTHORITIES & COMMISSIONS

**COMMITTEES:**  
CITIES  
CONSUMER PROTECTION  
FINANCE  
RACING, GAMING & WAGERING  
RULES

cc:

Governor Andrew Cuomo  
MTA Chairman/CEO Patrick Foye  
MTA Board of Directors  
MTA CFO Bob Foran