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Center for Disability Rights • Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY
Chinese-American Planning Council • Citizen Action, NY
Citizens Committee for New York City • Citizens Regional Transit Corporation
Citizens Union of the City of New York • Coalition for Economic Justice
Common Cause/New York • CUNY Institute for Urban Systems
Environmental Advocates • General Contractors Association • GOBike Buffalo
League of Women Voters of the City of New York • League of Women Voters NYS
Make the Road NY • Metro North Labor Council
National Conference of Firemen and Oilers District of 32BJ/SEIU
New York Communities for Change • NYC Environmental Justice Alliance
New York Immigration Coalition • New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
New York League of Conservation Voters • New York Public Transit Association
New York State Council of Machinists • NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign
Orange County Citizens Foundation • Partnership for the Public Good
Partners for a Livable Western New York
Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA • Picture the Homeless
Pratt Center for Community Development • Rails to Trails Conservancy
Reconnect Rochester • Regional Plan Association • Reinvent Albany
Riders Alliance • Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter • Teamsters Local 808 •
Transportation Alternatives Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Women's City Club of New York**

August 23, 2018

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Please sign A.8511/S.6807 Statewide Transit Lockbox Legislation into law.

Dear Governor Cuomo:

We write today to strongly urge you to sign the Statewide Transit Lockbox Bill, which was passed unanimously by the Assembly and Senate. (A.8511 Assemblymember Dinowitz/S.6807 Senator Golden).

The Statewide Transit Lockbox Bill increases fiscal transparency and public accountability while helping to safeguard dedicated transit funds. The bill's key provision requires the state to issue a "diversion impact statement" in the event that state dedicated transit funds are diverted. The impact statement details what effect the diversion will have on transit service, safety and maintenance.

Raiding dedicated transit funds is poor policy, and a breach of trust with the public who rightly believe that transit funds should go to improving transit. One quarter of the state's workforce relies on mass transit to get to work. They, their employers, and the economy rely on these dedicated taxes to help pay for subway, bus and commuter operations and transit capital projects. In addition, there is no way the state will achieve your climate pollution reduction goals unless we have a well-functioning mass transit system.

This legislation restores the impact statement that was the core of the 2011 Lockbox bill that was unanimously passed by the Legislature. That bill was also supported by a large group of civic, labor and business groups, the *New York Times* and *Crain's*. Unfortunately, that 2011 bill's impact statement was deleted during a December 2011 special session, and subsequent legislation to restore the impact statement and make the lockbox statewide for all transit agencies was vetoed by you in 2013.

We disagree with the statement you made in the veto message provided in 2013 regarding an identical version of this legislation, stating that the legislation repudiated a 2011 agreement with the Legislature and that legislative notification of an emergency is sufficient. The Legislature has again passed this legislation, showing their support for measure, and the bill does not reduce your flexibility in the event of a fiscal crisis - it simply calls for increased transparency and disclosure to the public of the impact of any diversions.

Across the state, transit agencies are experiencing severely constrained budgets. Steady and reliable funding sources are crucial to assuring the integrity of our transit systems, especially for the most vulnerable New Yorkers who can least afford to have their transit service cut or their fare hiked.

Given the importance of public transportation as the lifeblood of New York's economy, we join the members of the New York State Legislature - who passed the legislation unanimously - in asking you to sign the statewide transit lock box bill. Thank you for considering our request and signing this bill.

Sincerely,

Beth Finkel
New York State Director
AARP

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Executive Director
ALIGN

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Coalition for Economic Justice

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Common Cause New York

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Executive Director
CUNY Institute for Urban Systems

Peter Iwanowicz
Executive Director
Environmental Advocates of New York

Denise Richardson
Executive Director
General Contractors Association

Justin Booth
Executive Director
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Catherine T. Gray
Co-President
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Nancy Proyect
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Orange County Citizens Foundation

George Grasser
Executive Director
Partners for a Livable Western New York

Lou Jean Fleron, Sam Magavern
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William Henderson
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Kate Slevin
Senior Vice President, State Programs &
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Roger Downs
Conservation Director
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Chris Silvera
Secretary Treasurer
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Paul Steely-White
Executive Director
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Carolyn Wacey
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