MEMO OF SUPPORT

A1442B (Carroll)/S4625A (Comrie)

MTA Open Data Act

May 2021

TITLE OF BILL
An act to amend the public authorities law, in relation to enacting the metropolitan transportation authority open data act.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS
Section 1 of the bill is the bill title, and Section 2 of the bill states the Legislative intent. Section 3 adds a new section 1279-j to the Public Authorities Law (PAL) which codifies for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) the requirements of Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order No. 95 (EO 95) of 2013, the state’s Open Data EO that established http://data.ny.gov. The bill defines publishable data and requires the MTA to designate a data coordinator to oversee compliance. Within 180 days the MTA must create a schedule for release of open data within three years, which is provided to the Legislature and the public. Section 4 sets the effective date as immediately.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
The MTA is a $17 billion operating agency with a multitude of datasets that could be made public. To date, the MTA has only published 76 datasets on the state’s open data portal. In contrast, the NYS Department of Health currently has 550 datasets on the portal. While the MTA has made strides in releasing real-time service data to third parties like Google, open data related to contracts and finances has lagged and financial information is largely provided in inaccessible PDFs.

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This legislation would codify existing requirements of the Governor’s Open Data Executive Order 95 for the MTA, making it a legislative mandate rather than only an executive requirement. The MTA will be required to submit to the Legislature and the public a schedule for publishing data on its own website and the state’s open data website, [http://data.ny.gov](http://data.ny.gov). Receipt of this schedule will allow the Legislature to conduct better oversight of MTA data disclosure, and more closely monitor the MTA’s compliance with the law. In turn, this will provide greater public transparency of the MTA’s operations.

*Groups in support:*

- Reinvent Albany
- Center for Independence of the Disabled NY (CIDNY)
- Disabled In Action of Metropolitan NY
- Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA
- New York Lawyers for the Public Interest
- NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign
- Riders Alliance
- Rise and Resist Elevator Action Group
- Regional Plan Association
- StreetsPAC
- Tri-State Transportation Campaign