



Testimony to MTA Board

Re: As Big Winners, Suburbs Should Back Regional Funding of MTA Capital Plan

March 26, 2025

Good morning. I am Rachael Fauss, Senior Policy Advisor for Reinvent Albany. We advocate for more transparent and accountable New York government.

Just yesterday, we were proud to join with legislators and advocates in support of full funding for the MTA's 2025-2029 capital plan. Unfortunately, there is not yet a funding plan that has seen the light of day, and [Albany is talking about](#) repeating in 2025 what it did in 2022: raising the Payroll Mobility Tax for just New York City employers.

Our [new analysis](#) with the NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management of the last 25 years of MTA capital spending makes a strong case for why suburban elected officials should support congestion pricing and investment in the 2025-2029 capital plan – funded by *regional* taxes and/or fees. In the five capital plans from 2000 through 2024, the MTA has spent or will spend \$194 billion in constant 2024 dollars. As expected, the analysis found that capital spending is far higher per commuter rail rider than it is per New York City Transit subway and bus rider.

After we adjusted all MTA spending to its equivalent in 2024 dollars to account for inflation, we found the Long Island Rail Road got an average of \$18.70 per rider each year. Metro-North was second at \$10.15 per rider, and New York City Transit was last at \$2.57 per rider. The two commuter railroads have about 3% each of MTA ridership, but have gotten a hugely disproportionate share of capital spending: LIRR received 19% of capital spending, and Metro-North 10%. New York City Transit received 72% of capital funding, though it has 93% of riders.

As Albany finalizes the state budget, we hope they do right by New Yorkers and ensure that any new taxes, fees, or other revenues to support the 2025-2029 capital plan are regional. Given the generous investments in the LIRR and Metro-North, regional support will ensure the funding plan is both fair and sustainable.

Thank you for your consideration.