



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

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*Department of Communications*

TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2010

Brothers and Sisters,

Please find attached today's news clips (prepared by Jonathan Bennett.)

Fraternally,

Alan Saly and Jim Gannon  
TWU Local 100 Communications

**John Samuelson**  
*President*

**Israel Rivera**  
*Secretary Treasurer*

**Benita Johnson**  
*Recording Secretary*

**Angel Giboyeaux**  
*Administrative VP*

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# **TWU Local 100 Press Clips**

## **Jan. 5, 2010 (abridged)**

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## Razzle Dazzle

# An Advance Peek At The Year to Come



By RICHARD STEIER

There was a mayoral election last year, in case you didn't hear, in which not that many people voted, perhaps because nobody knew the contest might be close until after the polls closed.

Fortunately, there were other places to turn for political drama, like the State Senate, where the main impact of the changeover from 40 years of Republican rule to a slim Democratic majority seemed to be that a younger group of future inmates was running the asylum (and not as neatly as Joe Bruno had).

Or, if you prefer, Transport Workers Union Local 100, where three-term president Roger Toussaint, after first arranging a two-phase election in which the main vote and the final tally were held six months apart and stripping roughly half his membership of the right to vote based on dues arrears both real and imaginary, stepped aside for a lucrative position with his international union.

## A Knack for Making Friends Into Foes

Once again proving that forgotten but not gone is an annoying state of existence, he kept on meddling even after the man he groomed (in an unshaven kind of way) as a replacement was defeated by John Samuelson, one of the many old allies he managed to alienate over the years. Although we may have to await his memoirs to find out, this may have represented a final dagger in Mr. Toussaint's psyche, given that he failed to bend democracy to achieve victory where his old antagonist Mayor Bloomberg succeeded.

However predictable these developments may have been, none of them was foretold in our annual column of awards and predictions, which had Mr. Toussaint winning reelection with just 47 votes and saw Randi Weingarten elected Mayor. (The only time we came close to hitting the mark was with our forecast that she would be also chosen by Governor Paterson as U.S. Senator; it turned out she was his first runner-up to Kirsten Gillibrand.)

It's time now to cast aside last year's absurd prognostications in favor of a fresh batch for 2010, along with awards recognizing those who deserve something for their behavior in 2009:

**The Studio 54 Award** to Roger Toussaint for making Local 100 into a very exclusive democracy, as could be seen by the fact that nearly 2,500 fewer ballots were cast for Local 100's two presidential candidates combined than Mr. Toussaint got by himself when he first won office in 2000.

**The Band-Aid on His Mandate Award** to Mayor Bloomberg, who spent more than \$100 million on his re-election campaign against an opponent who never produced a clear rationale for his candidacy but was staring at an upset bigger than the Giants

over the Patriots in the Super Bowl until fairly late in the tallying.

**The Brothers Grimm Award** to the Bloomberg administration and its off-payroll helpers at the New York Post and the Citizens Budget Commission for their fractured fairy tales about the Variable Supplements Funds for cops and firefighters aimed at creating a public outcry for sweeping pension changes.

**The Snidely Whiplash Award** to Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Jay Walder, who seems determined to tie pay raises for transit workers to the railroad tracks by continuing his frivolous appeals of a contract arbitration award his predecessor is believed to have tacitly approved as part of an effort to improve labor-management relations.

## The Rabbi's Barred Mitzvah

**The Have I Got a Hall for You Award** to Rabbi Leib Glanz, the Correction Department Chaplain who arranged an engagement party and a bar mitzvah for the children of a wealthy inmate at the Manhattan Detention Complex and then resigned when the story made the papers and someone explained to him that in several respects this wasn't such a good idea.

**The I'm Out of Order? You're Out of Order Award** to Joe Bruno, who prior to his convictions for misusing his office as Senate Majority Leader to enrich himself earned a lecture from his trial judge for registering objections to and commentary upon his rulings in the case.

**The We Miss You Bruno Award** to Pedro Espada, and Hiram Monserrate, whose antics in creating legislative gridlock for the one month in which most of Albany's business gets done sunk the Senate lower in the public's eyes than could have been imagined.

**The 'Scuse Me, Sonny Award** to Bob Morgenthau, who on his way into retirement at age 90 after 35 years as Manhattan District Attorney flexed his political muscles in getting Cyrus Vance elected his successor, outfought Mayor Bloomberg in a battle over money from civil settlements of criminal cases brought by his office, and kept on bringing significant indictments.

**The Jennifer Hudson Award** to Governor Paterson for his own version of "And I Am Telling You, I'm Not Going," as he defies dreary poll numbers, a whopper of a budget deficit and the strong urging of President Obama to get out of the race and prepares to seek a full term.

**The Mario and Andrew Cuomo Father and Son Hardball Game Award** to Mr. Paterson and his dad Basil, who last week echoed early comments by Charlie Rangel and Carl McCall warning the younger Cuomo that he risked alienating black voters if

(Continued on Page 6) next page

he challenged David, notwithstanding polls showing the State Attorney General ahead by 40 points or more.

**The If the Cameras Weren't Rolling Does It Really Count Award** to Chuck Schumer, who discovered that nobody considers it fighting for New York when you curse out a working person doing her job properly by telling you to shut off your cell phone so the plane can leave.

#### More Honors for Dastardly Dick

**The Domestic Terrorist Award** to Dick Cheney, whose every anti-Obama utterance makes us regard Spiro T. Agnew more kindly.

**The I Once Ran for Mayor So Why Can't I Travel Like One Award** to Alan Hevesi, who's in hot water because while he was State Comptroller he took luxurious vacations to Israel and Italy on the dime of an investor seeking state pension business.

**The I Beg Your Pardon, Why Did I Help You to the Rose Garden Award** to American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, who both in Washington and New York is beset by the Obama Administration's plan to tie education stimulus funds to states expanding charter school programs and linking student performance to the granting of tenure.

**The Br'er Rabbit Award** to the Republican Senators who kept whaling away at Sonia Sotomayor during her Supreme Court confirmation hearings, even though their primary accomplishment was sabotaging the party's efforts to attract Latino (and Wise Latina) voters.

#### Bernie and Rudy, Together Again

**The Charlie Brown Why's Everybody Always Pickin' on Me Award** to Bernie Kerik, whose on-line whining about a government conspiracy to frame him got him locked up by a judge, offering him a preview of the next two years or so once Mr. Kerik is sentenced for being America's Felon.

**The I'm Deader Than Daedalus Award** to Rudy Giuliani for giving Mr. Kerik the wings to fly ever higher in the law-enforcement constellation until his own political career got burned up by the Lost Son.

And now, if the awardees will please leave the stage, it's time for this year's guaranteed-to-happen events:

**Jan. 7**—Bipartisan State Senate committee investigating Hiram Monserrate's conduct issues a report with the title, "Hiram? Fire 'im."

Mr. Monserrate's supporters respond that he is the victim of racism. Former TWU Local 100 President Roger Tous-saint, saying he knows what it's like to be persecuted for behaving rashly, offers Mr. Monserrate the services of his long-time outside public-relations firm, telling him, "They can do for you what they did for me."

The beleaguered State Senator replies, "You mean eat up your payroll while you drift into irrelevance?"

**Jan. 14**—The Citizens Budget Commission releases a detailed anal-

ysis of the pension and health-benefit savings the Bloomberg administration can achieve by closing all but 12 of the city's high schools and mandating home-schooling for the students who are not admitted to them.

#### Cruising to Victory

**Jan. 26**—District Council 37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts is re-elected by delegates who have just returned from a two-week cruise in the Bahamas at union expense.

Asked at her victory press conference whether she is concerned about how that looks to members when there are newspaper reports that the Mayor is going to propose 8,000 layoffs in his executive budget later that week, Ms. Roberts laughs for 10 minutes, stopping finally to say, "I'm only doing what my delegates expect from me."

**Jan. 29**—At 4:45 p.m. on a Friday, 28 hours after the Mayor announces the layoffs, DC 37's press office releases a statement saying that it is pre-

mature to comment on job cuts that have not yet been made but that it will reissue its 2003 white paper to all City Council Members explaining how no cuts will be necessary if the city's contract budget is reduced.

A call to the press office 10 minutes later gets a recorded message stating that it will be closed until the following Wednesday for an extended celebration of Groundhog Day.

#### The Real Big Green Machine

**Feb. 8**—A day after the New York Jets defeat the Dallas Cowboys in the Super Bowl, the Post discloses—on a front-page where the story shares space with a new Tiger Woods mistress—that Mr. Bloomberg had paid the team's opponents since the next-to-last game of the season to rest their starters, hoping a championship would revive interest in his plan for a West Side stadium for the team.

City officials decline comment, saying any spending for that purpose came from the campaign budget.

**Feb. 14**—Bernie Kerik is sentenced to 45 months in Federal prison, with Judge Stephen Robinson giving him a year more than the recommended maximum to deal with his attitude issues.

Mr. Kerik gets as far as, "Ay, Judge, adjust this," before he is taken away to meet possible valentines at Allenwood.

Rudy Giuliani declines comment.

#### Barron's Slap-Shot

**Feb. 24**—State Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, leading Governor Paterson by 37 points in the most-re-

cent voter poll, announces that he will challenge him for the Democratic nomination. City Council Member Charles Barron shows up at the press conference late, interrupts him by saying, "Nonviolence hasn't gotten us anywhere in fighting this oppression," then slaps Mr. Cuomo in the face.

"It's a mental health thing," Mr. Barron proclaims.

"Obviously," Mr. Cuomo says.

City University of New York trustee Jeff Weisenfeld charges that the inci-

dent occurred because too many State Troopers were traveling with Mr. Paterson to assign any to Mr. Cuomo, then alleges a racial double standard.

"Could Chuck Schumer have gotten away with that?" he asks.

**March 15**—The Off-Track Betting Corporation's bankruptcy reorganization plan takes effect, shuttering all but 12 OTB parlors and transferring much of the other betting to self-service terminals at Duane Reade stores. Reorganization honcho Sandy Frucher says this will give OTB saturation coverage "while largely eliminating the middle man: our employees."

Ms. Roberts reacts by threatening to picket Duane Reade, then discovers it has more stores than she has delegates.

#### Tanned, Rested And on Probation

**March 31**—An Albany judge sentences Joe Bruno to probation, citing both his advanced age and a belief that the former Senate Majority Leader had done so many favors for correction unions over the years, he was likely to find prison life sweeter than freedom.

Mr. Bruno is immediately placed at the top of the list of Republican candidates for U.S. Senator.

**April 1**—The state begins its new fiscal year with a \$13-billion budget deficit after Senate Republicans join with supporters of Mr. Monserrate to defeat attempts by the Governor to remedy the mess.

Mr. Paterson charges them with being part of a conspiracy to elect Mr. Cuomo, then says, "If he actually had to deal with these idiots the way I have for the past two years, he wouldn't want any part of my job."

**May 1**—United Federation of Teachers President Mike Mulgrew, frustrated that his union's contract is six months out of date and the Bloomberg administration is refusing to give it the already-established wage pattern, tells reporters at the UFT spring conference that he will seek major revisions in the Taylor Law.

In order to get the bill signed after the UFT's allies in the Legislature approve it, he continues, the union will be supporting Randi Weingarten for Governor.

Mr. Paterson reacts, "Et tu, Randi?"

**May 18**—At the state Democratic convention Mr. Cuomo, Mr. Paterson and Ms. Weingarten all get more than the 25 percent support necessary to qualify for the primary ballot.

Presumptive Republican nominee Rick Lazio decides to sit back while they carve each other up, privately telling his backers that he hopes his most-prominent supporter, Mr. Giuliani, is out of the country between then and Election Day.

**June 10**—Citing higher-than-expected tax receipts from Wall Street

*Continued on next page*

bonuses and the ones he paid his campaign staff, the Mayor appears with Council Speaker Christine Quinn to announce that there will be no need for layoffs or firehouse closings.

Uniformed Firefighters Association President Steve Cassidy calls a press conference to demand the resignation of Fire Commissioner Sal Cassano for allowing the Mayor to needlessly worry his members.

**July 3**—After an all-night debate at the start of the Fourth of July weekend, Congress finally approves a joint health-care bill minus a public option.

### Guess Who Palin's Spelled Like?

Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin tells Fox News that from her house she can see the ghost of Joe Stalin celebrating the end of the American way of life. Swift-Boat author Jerome Corsi tells Sean Hannity that he has found conclusive proof that President Obama is the illegitimate child of Che Guevara and Eva Peron, spawned during a secret rendezvous in Buenos Aires.

"That would explain his charisma," Mr. Hannity says somberly.

The broadcast is followed by a national wave of tea parties against illegal immigrants.

**July 28**—Airport metal detectors are set off by a cellphone Senator Schumer has stashed in his shorts to allow him to carry on conversations with fellow Senators and fund-raisers while avoiding confrontations with flight personnel.

Until the beeping began, one airline representative said, "We just figured he was another nutty New Yorker venting out loud."

**Aug. 29**—During a secret meeting at his Bermuda home, Mayor Bloomberg, alarmed by polls showing Ms. Weingarten closing to within two points of Mr. Cuomo with Mr. Pateron far behind, offers Mr. Mulgrew three 4-percent raises if he can persuade her to drop her candidacy.

### Klein's Worst Nightmare

"I can't risk having that woman getting more power than me, and Joel Klein is on the verge of a nervous breakdown," he explains.

Mr. Mulgrew says it is too late to convince Ms. Weingarten not to run, and besides, the campaign is leaving her less time to look over his shoulder.

Moments after he leaves Mr. Bloomberg's residence, his cellphone rings.

(Continued on Page 7)

"Where do you get off accusing me of micro-managing?" Ms. Weingarten says.

**Sept. 14**—Ms. Weingarten scores a stunning upset victory over Mr. Cuomo to become the Democratic nominee for Governor. An anonymous donor gives \$15 million to Republicans for Lazio to try to even up the odds in the November election.

**Oct. 11**—Trying to rebuild TWU Local 100 financially, President John Samuelsen files a petition to represent the more-than 20,000 people paying dues to DC 37 who are not actually members. "They wanted in as soon as we told them they could vote in union elections," he tells reporters. "When the actual DC 37 members find out that's one advantage we offer, they might also look to decertify."

### Washington Summit

A frantic Lillian Roberts is summoned to Washington for an emergency meeting with an equally frazzled Gerry McEntee, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

"What do we do?" she asks him.

"There are two options," he says. "You can mobilize your staff and get out and try to organize all these people we never gave union cards to sign, or we can call in the lawyers and tie them up for as long as it takes for Samuelsen to leave office."

There is a brief silence as she weighs the choice, and then they both exclaim, "Call the lawyers."

**Nov. 2**—Randi Weingarten defeats Rick Lazio by six points to become New York's first female, openly gay Governor. State Sen. Ruben Diaz announces he is resigning and moving to Texas rather than risk being a party to the Legislature finally approving gay marriage. Hiram Monserrate loses his reelection bid, leaving two members of the Gang of Four, Pedro Espada and Carl Kruger, to see whether they can milk their jobs for all they're worth without getting indicted.

### No Second Act in Senate

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand wins a two-year term by narrowly defeating Joe Bruno, who announces he will open an upstate branch of Al D'Amato's consulting firm. And Chuck Schumer withstands a surprisingly strong challenge by a Jet Blue flight attendant on the GOP line to gain his third term.



**ROGER TOUSSAINT:** About that building sale...

**Nov. 29**—On the day after the Thanksgiving weekend, Local 100 officials arrive at work to find the union's headquarters padlocked and their office equipment on the sidewalk. Standing across the street with a bullhorn is Roger Toussaint, who tells them he has purchased the building with the help of a \$100-million loan from AFSCME and DC 37.

"Disloyalty has its price," he declares. "You'd better find a new home."

### Museum to Rival Ripley's

Mr. Toussaint says the union's headquarters will be converted into a museum devoted to his nine years in office, featuring "our successful strike, our ground-breaking media policy, our astonishing dues-collection performance and our innovations in union democracy."

It will not, he emphasizes, be open to critics.

Mr. Samuelsen sets up temporary quarters behind a barricade outside the MTA's Madison Ave. offices.

**Dec. 23**—Fearing that he could get whipsawed in another arbitration fandangio after Ms. Weingarten takes office as Governor, Mr. Bloomberg finally gives the UFT its 4-percent raises.

"If we didn't settle now, she might've made me feel like I had already retired to become a labor philanthropist," he explains.

**Dec. 31**—An anonymous donor gives Local 100 a new home at the Kingsbridge Armory. "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," he explains. Happy New Year.

The 22-year-old Brooklyn woman couldn't contain her excitement as the clock counted down toward a midnight Gatorade toast.

"It's so exciting. I'm ecstatic," she said, surrounded by friends at the Town Tavern on W. Third St. "It's overwhelming, but it's a good feeling."

For the past few years, New Year's Eve meant lying on the couch in her family's Gravesend house, drained from the debilitating intestinal disease that nearly killed her.

This year, she planned to dance way past midnight in the magenta skirt and heels she picked out for the big night.

"I had fun getting dressed. I had fun getting ready," she said. "We're just going to dance and have a good time."

Molini's brother, Gregory-Paul, said he has to pinch himself to believe that his sister's transplant ordeal is finally over and she's on the path to full recovery.

"She's been through so much and she doesn't even look sick," Gregory-Paul Molini said. "It's unbelievable."

Kristin Molini suffered from a rare medical condition called in-



Kristin Molini, who underwent rare operation to replace five organs last May, raises a glass — of Gatorade — to toast the new year and her improving health as she celebrates with friends and family at Town Tavern in Greenwich Village last night. Photo by Pearl Gabel

testinal dysfunction and needed a transplant of her liver, stomach, pancreas, and small and large intestines to survive.

She waited for years before getting the dramatic call last May that a match had been found in a 6-year-old Mississippi boy who died of a traumatic injury.

Doctors performed a grueling and complex procedure in which all five organs from the single donor were transplanted into her body.

Just 300 operations of the same kind have ever been performed worldwide.

Her doctors say Molini is headed for a complete recovery, though she still has a tough road ahead.

"She recovered very fast," said Dr. Mercedes Martinez, a gastroenterologist and transplant hepatologist at New York Presbyterian Medical Center Columbia. "She can dance. She can walk. She's very active."

Since the transplant, Molini has undergone more than 30 intestinal biopsies and two liver biopsies to make sure her body is not rejecting the organs.

There were some signs of rejection a few weeks after the surgery, but doctors were able to combat them with medication.

"She's doing all the right things... and she's working hard to make herself better,"

Martinez said. "If she keeps working on the nutrition, she will be fine."

Molini said celebrating the New Year reminds her of all the years she lost battling disease.

She counts last year as the best in her young life and she's looking forward to even more in 2010.

"I missed out," she said. "But I'm ready to jump back in and make up for lost time."

## Bruised wiseguy's bail upped

A BANDAGED ex-mobster busted for swiping an engagement ring in a Craigslist scam was tossed in jail as prosecutors threatened to ramp up the charges against him.

Gerald DeGerolamo, 65, allegedly arranged to buy the bauble from David Cushman and then sprayed him with Mace to swipe it and give it to a gal pal, police sources said. He showed up in court with a broken nose, black eyes and stitches on his head and refused to say who beat him.

Though he was originally released on \$1,000 bail after the Saturday attack, a judge upped the bail to \$25,000 yesterday as prosecutors said they were weighing a first-degree robbery charge.

"The defendant has links to organized crime," prosecutor Steve Phlyvak warned.

DeGerolamo was busted in a 1993 "Trojan Horse scheme" in which he hid an accomplice in a crate delivered to an armored car company vault.

Rocco Parascandola and Melissa Grace

# MTA honcho during strike retires

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

THE MTA'S CHIEF financial officer, a behind-the-scenes force in city and state government, retired yesterday after 30 years of public service.

Gary Dellaverson, 55, inked a contract with labor leaders that both ended the 2005 Christmas transit strike and contained paycheck deductions for health care, a precedent-setting concession.

He was the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's pointman during Albany negotiations in 2009 that pro-

duced a series of new taxes and fees generating about \$2 billion annually for the nation's largest network of subways, buses and commuter trains.

After Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, Dellaverson organized and accompanied a caravan of MTA buses and volunteers to aid the rescue.

"I think he's one of the most capable people I've worked with in this business and he's a decent, honorable, hard-working, thoughtful person," City Labor Relations Commissioner James Hanley said.

After a brief stint at a law firm, Del-

laverson took a 50% pay cut and joined the city's labor relations office in 1978, negotiating contracts with various municipal unions.

He later worked as a deputy commissioner in the Fire Department before becoming labor relations director for the MTA in 1990. He was named chief financial officer two years ago.

"Gary is an enormously dedicated public servant who helped guide the MTA through numerous difficult situations during his distinguished career," MTA Chairman Jay Walder said.

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# Union Rep Seats on MTA Board Out of Service

By ARI PAUL

The Chief

Jan. 8, 2010

[http://www.thechief-leader.com/news/2010-01-08/News\\_of\\_the\\_week/Union\\_Rep\\_Seats\\_On\\_MTA\\_Board\\_Out\\_of\\_Service.html](http://www.thechief-leader.com/news/2010-01-08/News_of_the_week/Union_Rep_Seats_On_MTA_Board_Out_of_Service.html)

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority board has lost the six nonvoting seats reserved for commuter and union representatives, unless the State Legislature reauthorizes them. The law mandating these seats expired Dec. 31.

While the members do not have the ability to vote on major issues such as the MTA budget, they often use their positions to voice criticism of MTA plans at the board's monthly meetings.

'Hurts Riders, Workers'

"It really hurts the riders and the workers," said Gene Russianoff, the attorney for the Straphangers Campaign. "Here was a direct pipeline to the big cheeses about what riders and workers were thinking, and that is going to be lost for what I hope will be a very brief period."

Andrew Albert, the non-voting member representing the New York City Transit Riders Council, believed it was possible that the Legislature would renew the mandate by the next board meeting Jan. 27. He added that the input of the rider and union board members was valuable in the decision making process.

"We bring lots of issues to the table," he said. "We never felt like we were anything less until a vote came."

Mr. Albert said that if their seats are not restored by Jan. 27, advocates could still make their agendas known to the board during the public comment periods before each meeting.

The last non-voting union reps on the board were Vincent Tessitore Jr., a chairman of Local 645 of the United Transportation Union; Norman Brown, legislative director of the New York State Council of Machinists; and Ed Watt, the former secretary-treasurer of Transport Workers Union Local 100.

The other members representing the riders' councils were Ira Greenberg of the Long Island Rail Road and James Blair of Metro-North.

Mr. Russianoff couldn't say for sure why the Legislature did not renew the law mandating the six seats, but noted, "I just think it's part and parcel of a Legislature that didn't deal with many issues."

## **[Transit worker assists in rescue of] man pinned under A train**

By John Lauinger

Daily News

Jan 5 2010, page 35

[Not posted on the internet]

Three firefighters, an FDNY paramedic, a cop and a transit worker helped rescue an unidentified man who was pinned underneath a downtown A train at Eighth Ave. and 15th St. shortly before noon yesterday, Fire Department officials said. The man, who had suffered a broken right ankle and a severely mangled right knee, was in serious but stable condition when he was taken to Bellevue Hospital. It was unclear how he came to be hit by the train. "He was conscious, but appeared to be in shock," said FDNY Capt. Robert Morris.

## **Transit begins bus partition trial program [with input from Local 100]**

By Benjamin Kabak

2nd Ave. Sagas

Jan 4 2010

<http://secondavenuesagas.com/2010/01/04/transit-begins-bus-partition-trial-program/>

New plexiglass partitions will protect Bus Operators from out-of-control passengers. (Photo courtesy of New York City Transit)

When a New York City Transit bus driver was murdered by an irate passenger in Dec. 2008, the MTA promised a bus partition pilot program aimed at keeping drivers safer. Late last week, that pilot program debuted in Bus 5052 along the B46, the same route that played host to Edwin Thomas' murder.

The partition is a step up in the world of bus driver safety but it is not without its problems. The divider is made of a piece of plexiglass one inch thick and with non-glare coating, and it nearly isolates the driver from his riders. It does not, however, fully enclose the driver. There is an opening at the top and side so that the driver can access the fare box.

"It's difficult to come up with a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to this simply because our Bus Operators aren't one size," Transit spokesman Paul Fleuranges said. "Each has to position the wheel, seat, mirrors to their preference, and the same is true for something like a partition. They all have to be comfortable with the environment the partition creates as they drive. Our overriding goal here is to provide both a safe and comfortable environment for our Bus Operators."

Right now, Transit plans to order 100 partitions for one model of the RTS buses similar to those in use along the B46, and according to the Daily News, that is so far the only model approved by the union. Transit and the TWU are working to develop partitions for other bus models as well.



It's tough to speak out against bus partitions. After all, bus operators in 2008 reported over 235 assaults, and Thomas' murder, the first of a bus driver since 1981, certainly highlighted the extremes of driver safety. Because cops do not often patrol buses, drivers are often left to fend for themselves. As long as the operators can still assist disabled riders and can still interact with passengers when they have to, Transit and the union should do all they can to ensure driver safety.

## **Letter to the editor: At Bus Depots, 'Fix' Is In**

The Chief

Jan. 8, 2010

[http://www.thechief-leader.com/news/2010-01-08/Letters\\_to\\_the\\_Editor/At\\_Bus\\_Depots\\_Fix\\_Is\\_In.html](http://www.thechief-leader.com/news/2010-01-08/Letters_to_the_Editor/At_Bus_Depots_Fix_Is_In.html)

To the Editor:

New York City Transit Department of Buses depot managers are receiving year-end bonuses based on fraudulent statistics.

Here is how the scam works. Part of the performance bonus is based on the number of road calls for each depot. A road call is generated when something goes wrong with a bus, including mechanical breakdown, engine warning lights, fire, dirty bus etc.

The proper procedure for a Bus Operator is to call the console dispatcher and report the problem. If it can't be resolved over the radio, a road truck is dispatched along with a road dispatcher and a "road call" is generated.

To reduce the number of these incidents and inflate their bonuses, managers are pressuring Bus Operators to call the depot directly. If a Bus Operator calls the console dispatcher, he is then immediately taken into a Superintendent's office and "interviewed," usually without a union rep present. This interview is an intimidation tactic and is leading some Bus Operators to drive unsafe buses and avoid the interview.

Furthermore, Superintendents sent to a breakdown are ordering Bus Operators to drive unsafe buses back to the depots. I was ordered once to drive a bus with a fully deployed wheelchair lift, sticking four feet out into traffic, to the Ulmer Park Depot just to avoid having a road call registered. I refused to drive the bus.

A Bus Operator who has a breakdown near the depot and calls console is sometimes issued a violation for "no defect." The message here is, "if you break down near the depot, drive back an unsafe bus; just don't mess up my year-end bonus." Unfortunately, some depot chairs who do not have the big picture in mind are going along with this practice.

With management ordering five-day suspensions for minor infractions, this is not the time to be padding the payroll for managers.

TOMMY McNALLY  
Ulmer Park Depot

## Long Island Bus faces even deeper service cuts

By Alfonso A. Castillo  
Newsday  
Jan 4 2010

[http://mobile.newsday.com/inf/infomo?site=newsday&view=page7&feed:a=newsday\\_5min&feed:c=longisland&feed:i=1.1682313&nopaging=1](http://mobile.newsday.com/inf/infomo?site=newsday&view=page7&feed:a=newsday_5min&feed:c=longisland&feed:i=1.1682313&nopaging=1)

The multiple budget cuts that Long Island Bus is facing from all directions could lead to deeper slashes in service than the eight bus lines already pegged for elimination - cuts that advocates say would be felt most by those who can afford them least.

"We absolutely need more attention to this issue," said Kate Slevin, executive director of the nonprofit Tri-State Transportation Campaign. She added that the agency's ridership - many of them low-income workers with no cars, senior citizens and community college students - "are very vulnerable."

"And they deserve more attention than they receive," she said.

The service cuts already adopted will leave riders in Merrick 's south shore without a bus line, force N80 riders to make long hikes to get the N81, and complicate trips for many high school and college students who rely on Long Island Bus to get to class.

And, barring a decision by the Nassau Legislature to restore a \$1.4-million reduction in aid, significantly more cuts are on the way, Metropolitan Transportation Authority spokesman Jeremy Soffin said.

At the mercy of subsidies

With the smallest slice of the MTA 's total ridership - and of its overall budget - Long Island Bus has long been seen by transit advocates as the agency's stepchild. That perception, however, is belied by Long Island Bus' ridership record of 32.6 million in 2008 and a reputation in transit circles for smart use of its budget and equipment, rolling stock that is generally older than that of other MTA bus companies.

Long Island Bus' unusual management and funding structure has made it particularly vulnerable to harsh budgetary measures. The MTA even threatened a 75 percent fare hike last year, before settling on a 10 percent increase.

Although operated by the MTA , Long Island Bus is owned by Nassau County, and pieces together its budget from subsidies from several different bodies.

>>VIDEO: [Click here to see the widespread cuts across several bus lines](#)

The agency's most recent troubles only began with the cuts that the MTA board approved Dec. 16. Those cuts slashed \$600,000 from Long Island Bus' budget in 2010 and \$1.3 million in each of the following years through 2013.

On top of that, the state cut its aid to Long Island Bus for this year by \$2 million. And Nassau County reduced its annual subsidy from \$10.5 million to \$9.1 million for 2010.

In total, the cutbacks mean a \$4 million chunk out of Long Island Bus' \$135 million budget for this year. Because Long Island Bus is the most highly subsidized of the MTA's transit agencies, the reductions take a heavy toll on operations.

And it's harder to make up any budget decreases through paying customers. Long Island Bus gets only 30 percent of its operating revenue from fares, compared with New York City Transit's 52.5 percent and the Long Island Rail Road's 44 percent.

Few officials in its corner

MTA board member Mitchell Pally, of Stony Brook, said it is apparent that Long Island Bus "doesn't get the attention" of other transit services. In part, he said, that is because of the bus line's inadequate representation.

Since MTA board vice chairman David S. Mack of Great Neck, first appointed in 1993 by then-Gov. George Pataki, resigned his seat in September, the board has been without an appointee by the Nassau County executive. Long Island Bus, unlike most other transit agencies, also does not have a dedicated commuters council under the MTA's Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee.

Pally said Nassau "has not been fulfilling its obligations" to fund the system and that he hopes that changes on newly sworn-in County Executive Edward Mangano's watch.

Former County Executive Thomas Suozzi said in a recent interview that he "always supported Long Island Bus" and noted that when the subsidy is combined with more than \$3 million the county government is paying in a newly imposed payroll tax, Nassau is contributing more toward the MTA than ever before.

Mangano was not available for comment. In October, he told LetThereBeLightHouse.com that mass transit is "integral" to the county's future and that the county's subsidy "is small compared to the number of people who rely on public transit . . . and put that money back into the local economy."

Legis. David Denenberg (D- Merrick ) said he could support a plan to increase county funding of Long Island Bus, but he noted that it was the Democratic Legislature that restored half of a \$2.8-million cut to the agency proposed by Suozzi.

The Republican -proposed county budget, co-sponsored by Mangano, aimed to restore just \$1 million.

"I can't believe that Mangano plans to pay more toward Long Island Bus than the Democrats did," said Denenberg, whose Merrick district may be the hardest-hit by the proposed route cuts.

## Christine Quinn's Letter to the editor: On-Track funding

NY Post

January 5, 2010

[http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/letters/on\\_track\\_funding\\_007ZJLZhqI2N38HCqKmZJ#ixzz0bjyw3Tpu](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/opinion/letters/on_track_funding_007ZJLZhqI2N38HCqKmZJ#ixzz0bjyw3Tpu)

"Don't Mug the Subways" (Editorial, Dec. 26) displays a gross misunderstanding of the City Council's plan to save student Metro Cards and service cuts as well as our smart investment in connecting the No. 7 subway line to the Far West Side.

As you correctly note, the extension of the No. 7 line is key to the economic expansion of the West Side and the city. However, the project is not funded from the MTA capital budget at all. It is funded through a city-created entity, the Hudson Yards Infrastructure Corporation, put in place in 2005 when the council approved the re-zoning of the eastern rail yards.

We knew then that huge deficits loomed for the MTA. None of the pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) or stimulus capital funds we have proposed using to avoid the MTA-approved cuts are part of the funding of the No. 7.

The federal-stimulus legislation explicitly allows for the use of up to 10 percent of stimulus funds for operating expenses because policymakers recognized the financial pressures that transit systems are facing nationwide.

The use of budgeted PAYGO capital funds to avoid operating cuts during a downturn is widely accepted public-finance theory. Using current-year revenue for current-year operating expenses is nothing like the 1970s practice of using borrowed funds for operations.

Post readers should rest assured that the council has the best interests of the mass-transit riding public and taxpayers at heart.

Christine C. Quinn  
City Council Speaker  
Manhattan

James Vacca  
City Councilman  
The Bronx

## **Budget advice: Slash pork barrel spending, freeze pay of state government workers**

BY Glenn Blain

Daily News

January 5 2010

[http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/01/05/2010-01-05\\_budget\\_advice\\_cut\\_deep\\_\\_freeze\\_pay.html#ixzz0bjwLMIMp](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/01/05/2010-01-05_budget_advice_cut_deep__freeze_pay.html#ixzz0bjwLMIMp)

ALBANY - Lawmakers should freeze the salaries of government workers and slash pork barrel spending to make a dent in New York's fiscal crisis, a new report says.

The 76-page report from the Empire Center for New York State Policy warned that record-shattering budget gaps are in the offing unless the state takes drastic steps to cut spending.

The conservative think-tank's warning mirrors that of Gov. Paterson, who is expected to devote the bulk of tomorrow's State of the State address to the money crisis.

"This for the state has all the makings of the most severe fiscal crisis the state has ever seen if ... they don't deal with next year's gap overwhelmingly with permanent spending reductions," said E.J. McMahon, director of the Empire Center.

Among the top recommendations is a call for the Legislature to freeze public sector salaries - including those of teachers and local government workers - for three years. That would save up to \$2 billion a year.

The report also recommends a \$7.8 billion cut in Medicaid spending over three years, an \$8.5 billion reduction in school aid over three years and the sale of some state assets, like golf courses and Battery Park City.

McMahon said the Legislature could save \$451 million over three years by cutting its budget in half and eliminating unspent member items.

Union leaders criticized McMahon for trying to advance the agenda of wealthy corporate interests at the expense of state workers and school children.

"If we are going to turn the state around, it is going to require an investment in education, not a reduction," said Richard Iannuzzi, president of the state teachers union.

Aside from addressing the budget crisis, Paterson also is expected to include calls to tighten Albany's weak ethics laws.

[gblain@nydailynews.com](mailto:gblain@nydailynews.com)

## The sounds of anything but silence

By Benjamin Kabak

2nd Ave. Sagas

Jan 5 2010

<http://secondavenuesagas.com/2010/01/05/the-sounds-of-anything-but-silence/>

In 2005, iPod ads were everyone in the subway. Today, bleeding headphones have become ubiquitous. (Photo by flickr user t\_a\_i\_s)

I found myself on Monday evening awaiting a downtown 4 train on the IRT platform at Union Square. As the downtown 6 pulled out and an express idled on the uptown tracks, it was loud. The automated PA voice kept warning me to stand back from the moving platform; the downtown trains screeched around the sharp curve into the station; and the heated system on the idling uptown express hummed.

It is little wonder then that the noisiest spot in New York City is at a subway station. According to a recent study by Hear the World, the noisiest spot in the city with trains roaring by is the B/D/F/V stop at 42nd St./Bryant Park. The noise levels reach 93 decibels at the subway system's 18th busiest stop.

According to hearing experts, that level of screech is enough to cause permanent hearing damage, and Craig Kasper, a Columbia doctor who works with Hear the World, urged people to be mindful of the noise. "Once you reach anything over 85 decibels, you are really at risk," he said. "If you hear a loud noise, just put fingers in your ears."

Outside of Bryant Park, subways in general were the fourth most noisiest part of New York City, behind the West Side Highway and the bus lanes on 42nd St. east of Fifth Ave. A typical subway ride exposes a straphanger to 80 decibels of sound. Although the new R160s are designed to reduce noise levels both as trains ride the rails and as they brake, there's only so much engineering can accomplish, and sounds are aplenty underground.

Interestingly, this survey seems to reduce the noise levels found this summer when one group warned of 100+ decibel exposure at some subway stations. Those built around curves are the loudest as trains make more noises braking through twisted sections of track. If only we could go back in time to fix those errors of original engineering over 100 years ago.

Noise on the subways, meanwhile, is not a new phenomenon. As Bill Bahng Boyer, one of my guest columnists over the summer, explained in August, New Yorkers have been complaining about the noise since October 29, 1904, one day after the IRT opened for business. What is a new problem however is headphone bleed. Have you tried to take a relatively silent ride lately? It's impossible.

Once upon a time, boom boxes were the scourge of New York City subway riders. Those with their noises in magazines would dread the arrival of a gang of youths with a loud radio on for all to hear. It was the ultimate in obtrusive noise pollution, and eventually the combination of a crackdown and the onset of personal audio devices saw boom boxes become a relic of another era.

Today, though, we are subjected to subpar headphone earbuds. Brought about by the iPod revolution, nearly everyone is now satisfied with tinny headphones that leak sound all over the place. Some riders listen at volumes that are death to the ears, and nothing is worse than hearing the strains of something from 15 away in a half-empty subway cars. Others simply don't know how bad their headphones are. One day, I imagine, New York City may see an increase in the number of people suffering hearing damage, and the iPod earbuds will be to blame.

For now, we should be mindful of the noise. Obviously, the subways are noisy, and those sounds can impact our life. We tend to tune out the sounds of metal-on-metal, the sounds of air conditioner drones, the screech of brakes. But it's there, hurting our ears decibel after decibel.

## **[NYC EMS worker disabled by work boots he was required to wear]**

BY Jonathan Lemire

Daily News

January 5 2010

[http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/01/05/2010-01-05\\_he\\_got\\_the\\_boots\\_\\_\\_it\\_cost\\_his\\_career.html#ixzz0bjsxePD9](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2010/01/05/2010-01-05_he_got_the_boots___it_cost_his_career.html#ixzz0bjsxePD9)

He was an EMS poster boy, but Keith Rock's career may be over because of a pair of clunky boots.

The 22-year veteran - who is so respected the FDNY put him on posters last year to mark Emergency Medical Service week - blames the mandatory boots for destroying the job he loved.

"I try to stay positive, but I can't even tie my shoes," the 50-year-old paramedic said in his Bronx home yesterday.

The awkward footwear was first given to EMTs and paramedics in 2006. Two years later, EMS workers were ordered to wear the Pro-Warrington boots - a pound heavier and more than an inch wider than their previous gear - all the time.

The "clown shoes" have been blamed for several falls - and Rock's is among the worst.

In October, he was helping a patient in the Bronx when he lost his balance on a set of stairs and pitched forward, rupturing tendons in both legs.

Rock's legs, the foundation of a strong physique that landed him in bodybuilding competitions and enabled him to help countless patients, can now barely support his own weight.

"I can never work in an ambulance again," said Rock, who was rushed into surgery after the accident and is now undergoing painful physical therapy. "It's the worst thing that ever happened to me."

EMT union officials - who blamed the boots for dozens of injuries - filed a grievance against the FDNY.

In September, as first reported by the Daily News, an arbitrator ruled for the union and EMS workers were allowed to go back to the old boots.

Paramedics like Rock, who no longer had the old ones, were required to wear the Pro-Warringtons.

"I struggled with them, losing my balance on steps and having trouble driving because the boot was so big it would bump the gas when I tried to hit the brake," Rock said. "I didn't want to complain and get in trouble."

On Oct. 24, after tending to a patient who had a seizure on the second floor of a Wickham Ave. home, Rock was bringing equipment downstairs to his ambulance when the heel of his boot caught on a step.

"My knees went forward while the rest of me went backwards," he said. "I was in so much pain [and] I couldn't lift my legs up. I thought 'Oh, my God, what did I do?'"

Last month, the FDNY and EMT union reached a deal allowing EMS workers to wear other brands of boots until the department settles on a new required model - a decision made too late to help Rock.

"I'm glad those boots won't hurt anyone else," said Rock, who is contemplating suing the city or the boot manufacturer.

FDNY officials have defended the Pro-Warringtons and insisted they worked with EMS workers to find boots that fit.

His legs encased in heavy metal braces, Rock has been told by doctors he will never be able to carry a patient or equipment again.

"I hope someday someone will say, 'This is just a dream, wake up, it's over,'" Rock said. "This is the job I love and I just want to go back to work."

jlemire@nydailynews.com

## **A Decade of Disaster for Workers**

By Stewart Acuff - Director of Organizing, AFL-CIO

Huffington Post

January 2, 2010

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stewart-acuff/a-decade-of-disaster-for\\_b\\_409326.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/stewart-acuff/a-decade-of-disaster-for_b_409326.html)

A front page story in the Jan. 2 issue of the Washington Post gives a damning report on George Bush's economic policy and what happened to our country during the last decade, the decade of the aughts.

Put succinctly, the decade was a disaster for America's working families.

\* Zero job growth in the last decade when every previous for 60 years had job growth of at least 20 percent.



\* Not stagnant but declining income for working and middle class families.

\* And declining net worth or family wealth--despite substantial growth in productivity.

You have to hope that Lawrence Summers and the economic team at the White House are reading the Post.

You cannot grow the economy from the top. You must have broadly shared prosperity.

As the Post put it: "Capital was funneled to build mini-mansions in the Sun Belt, many which now sit empty, rather than toward industrial machines or other business investment that might generate economic output and jobs for years to come."

The prescription for a policy of broadly shared prosperity is clear:

\* Pass the Employee Free Choice Act to allow workers to freely form unions and bargain for a fair and greater share of the wealth they create and the productivity they generate.

\* Reform health care. Take the system from the grip of insurance companies, create a large public plan to make sure everyone is covered and to compete with the insurance companies--and do not tax the benefits of working families. Force every employer to provide health care for their workers.

\* Invest now, immediately in sustainable energy--wind farms, solar farms and small scale solar energy generation. Make sure all elements of new energy generation are produced here with wages that can sustain middle class lifestyles. No more impoverishing our own people. That means wind turbines built here, not in China, erected here by union operations. Power lines and a new electricity grid erected by members of the Utility Workers Union.

\* Create a real industrial policy and investment incentives and re-think trade policy to re-create an American manufacturing base so we get back to creating wealth instead of borrowing it.

## **Tax on Health Care Will Erode Coverage for Middle Class**

By Tula Connell

AFL-CIO Blog

Jan 4, 2010

<http://blog.afcio.org/2010/01/04/tax-on-health-care-will-erode-coverage-for-middle-class/>

A new year brings with it lots of hope.

Let's hope 2010 brings a health care reform bill that does not penalize working families with a tax on their coverage. Because right now, as New York Times columnist Bob Herbert aptly describes it, there is a "middle-class tax time bomb ticking in the Senate's version" of the health care reform legislation.

The bill that passed the Senate with such fanfare on Christmas Eve would impose a confiscatory 40 percent excise tax on so-called Cadillac health plans, which are popularly viewed as over-the-top plans

held only by the very wealthy. In fact, it's a tax that in a few years will hammer millions of middle-class policyholders, forcing them to scale back their access to medical care.

Jon Walker at Firedoglake took a look at a report released in December by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which found the health care tax "will result in most people getting worse health insurance from their employer, insurance that covers less." Walker translates the report's conclusions this way:

Your employer will reduce what your current insurance plan [covers] and put in place high co-pays and deductibles. The result is that many people with employer-provided health insurance will see their insurance get much worse. For younger, healthier employees, possibly getting less comprehensive insurance but maybe higher wages (I think it is very doubtful that there is a pure dollar for dollar passthrough), this might be a decent deal. For older, less healthy employees this is a very bad deal. They will be forced to pay much more out-of-pocket for their health care.

More cost, less coverage for working families. Yet portraying the tax as only affecting "Cadillac plans," purposely obscures how it will harm America's working families.

Or, as Herbert puts it:

The tax on health benefits is being sold to the public dishonestly as something that will affect only the rich....



Local 100 Photo

**MTA 'RAIDING' FUNDS:** In her first public statement since being sworn in as Transport Workers Union Local 100 recording secretary Jan. 1, Benita Johnson tells the State Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions Jan. 7 that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority steered operational expenses into the capital fund, which caused a budget gap it intends to fill with service cuts and layoffs.

## Recommend CO's Firing

(Continued from Page 3)

inmates share PIN numbers as currency so it is not always possible to determine who made the call. Ms. Baker claimed that Mr. Hunter was calling her 20-year-old daughter, Sheke, without her knowledge.

### His Sister Knew Her Daughter

Mr. Hunter's sister, Kadisha, testified that she met Sheke in 2006 while Sheke was working at Century 21, where they became friends. According to both of them, in November 2007 Kadisha invited Sheke to her house. While Kadisha was showing her around, Sheke saw a photograph of a man she thought was "cute," who was Kadisha's brother. Kadisha asked if Sheke would like Mr. Hunter to call her and she agreed. In late November of that year, Mr. Hunter started calling her and they would speak two or three times a day. Sheke's phones were in her mother's name.

On March 19, 2008, Mr. Hunter notified the state Division of Parole that he would be residing with his "girlfriend, Doreen Baker" and her three children, including Sheke. Ms. Baker consented, providing a utility bill to parole. Mr. Hunter gave a sheet of loose-leaf paper to Parole with a note from Ms. Baker, which she later denied providing.

On April 18, 2008, Parole Officers came to Ms. Baker's residence for a home visit. They said Mr. Hunter introduced Ms. Baker as his girlfriend. Ms. Baker later claimed she was home at the time but denied Mr. Hunter introduced her as his girlfriend.

The Correction Department indicated that Ms. Baker did not inform them that Mr. Hunter was living with her, but she acknowledged he would stay there "from time to time."

Sheke testified that she stopped seeing Mr. Hunter in August or September 2008, before he was arrested again and returned to Rikers Island. Ms. Baker did not notify the Correction Department that she knew Mr. Hunter.

In November 2008, the department conducted an investigation during which Ms. Baker denied having any friends who had been in custody and stated she knew Mr. Hunter from her housing facility. She denied receiving calls from him and stated he had a relationship with her daughter.

### Ignored Her Responsibilities

"Thus, Correction Officers have several responsibilities: first, not to consort with inmates; second, if a friend or relative becomes incarcerated at the employee's facility, to immediately notify the commanding officer; and third, not to correspond with inmates and former inmates," the decision by ALJ Alessandra F. Zorogniotti stated. "Here, it was undisputed that Mr. Hunter was twice housed in Ms. Baker's facility, that he called Ms. Baker's two cell phones approximately 180

## Letters to the Editor Assault on

### To the Editor:

Today all union workers in the public sector are under attack as never before. We face a rich oligarchy, represented by such organizations as so-called Citizens Budget Commission, the Association for a Better York, the Business Council of New York State, and the Real Estate Board of New York that put themselves in the position of telling our political leaders how to compensate municipal workers. And their advice is simple enough: cut our salaries, cut our pensions, cut our benefits.

These wealthy men and women who rarely set foot in subways or buses, and who dine in restaurants where the bill for a meal can equal the weekly food budgets of many working families, have gotten it fundamentally wrong when they call for slashing pensions and benefits of public-sector workers both current and retiring.

In a Dec. 21 article in the New York Post, Carol Kellerman, president of the CBC, says that public-sector benefits—meaning salaries, pensions and health care—are more generous than the job market requires. She says that for the last two decades more, the salary gap between the public and private sectors has deepened or reversed for most job categories (excluding management and selected professions.) So it's time, she argues, to slash municipal workers' benefits until it matches what workers in unionized private companies earn.

The last three decades have been a time of concerted assault on public-sector government and industry leaders during which the percentage of unionized workers in the private sector has steadily declined. Public-sector unions, by and large, held their own, but our brothers and sisters employ businesses across America, it's a bloodbath. So what the article is comparing us to today is a private sector stripped of union representation where employers have had a free hand to fire, repress, and intimidate, lowering wages and benefits in the process.

Our detractors should remember that unions fought for the good wages and benefits we enjoy today through a long and hard history of strikes, jailings, and even massacres of armed thugs working for corporations. And when unions won good contracts, they set the standards for employees, public- and private-sector alike. Unions demanded and won the eight-hour day, the 40-hour week, safety standards and the end of child labor. We won the right to be paid equal wages for equal work. As America prospered after the Depression, these wins spread throughout the economy. The greatest financial crisis the U.S. had to contend with since the 1930s, the globalization drives, and this is what saved the great American middle class.

Today's auto workers, forewarned by bankers to take pay cuts and who are paid \$14 per hour, cannot buy their companies make. I presume this is fine with the Citizens Budget

Dave Katzman

---

From: TWU Local100 [TWU@xmr3.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, January 12, 2010 12:19 PM  
To: Dave Katzman  
Subject: Daily News: Samuelsen appoints Tate to Local 100 staff

from today's

# DAILY NEWS

January 12, 2010

## Transit union rivals bury the hatchet



THE NEW transit union president has extended an olive branch - and a union post - to his election rival, citing the need for a united front against MTA management.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen appointed Curtis Tate to the union's political action committee. Samuelsen bested Tate in the presidential election last month.

"Infighting has crippled us," Samuelsen said. "I'm looking to unify the union and get ready to face off against the MTA and the threat of layoffs."

Tate, who headed the "United Invincible" slate, said the personnel move at the bus and subway workers' union "signals the election is over and it's time for everybody to lay down their swords and come together for Local 100."

MTA plans to help plug a nearly \$400 million budget gap include layoffs.

**Pete Donohue**

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# TWU Local 100 Hits MTA on Refusal to Use Available Funds for Operating Deficit



In the new Local 100 Administration's first public statement, Recording Secretary Benita Johnson slammed the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for diverting funds meant for operating expenses into the capital budget. This has created a crisis of service cuts and fare hikes for students which didn't have to happen.

"There are straightforward and practical solutions to the MTA's budget woes," Johnson told Assemblyman Richard Brodsky, at the January 7<sup>th</sup> hearing before the Assembly Committee on Corporations, Authorities, and Commissions, "[and] I am not talking about service cuts, layoffs, or the elimination of student passes."

Ms. Johnson testified at the hearing at the direction of Local 100 President John Samuelson.

Johnson pointed out that, over the past four years, the MTA has diverted some \$500 million in operating revenues to pay for capital work on a "pay-as-you go basis." This "raiding" of the operating budget to pay for capital projects continues to the tune of \$50 million each year. Local 100 believes these monies could be better spent on restoring service to riders who depend on mass transit.

Furthermore, the MTA has declined to take advantage of the opportunity to use \$90 million in ARRA stimulus funds to support subway and bus operations, preferring to use the money for such purposes as funding cost overruns on the Fulton Street Transit Center, scheduled to open in 2014. "We should all be outraged by this," Johnson said, asking the MTA to join with Local 100 in supporting HR 2746, proposed legislation which calls more additional operating assistance to mass transit systems.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder, at the hearing, said that he intends to see that "every single dollar is well spent." Local 100 believes the most effective way to cut costs is to shift reliance on outside contractors for critical capital projects to our in-house experienced workforce. In her testimony, Ms. Johnson documented three cases of cost-over-runs – the SONET system, the computer-based control system, and the Automatic Train Supervision System – which have added over \$200 million to budgeted totals because of failures on the part of outside contractors.

In the area of labor relations, Mr. Walder did not indicate whether the MTA plans to appeal the decision by the State Court of Appeals, recognizing the recent contract terms awarded through arbitration between Local 100 and the MTA. We hope that the MTA takes its goal of making sure that "every dollar is well spent," by not wasting taxpayer dollars on misguided litigation. Local 100 members received a contract award which was less than the Citywide pattern awarded to municipal workers over the same period. To appeal the award after this point only continues to make a mockery of the Taylor Law, which calls for arbitration to settle labor disputes.

(for info contact: Jim Gannon)

NYDailyNews.com

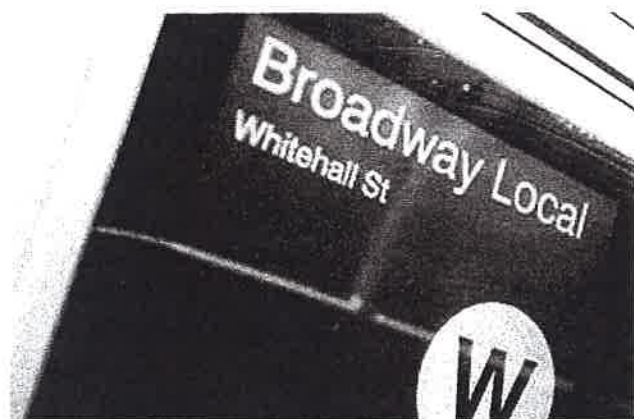
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## MTA is going to okay \$100M transit worker pay hikes, but will appeal increases set for third year

BY Pete Donohue  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Tuesday, January 19th 2010, 4:00 AM



**Ip for News**The MTA will agree to follow an August arbitration ruling and give workers a 4% salary boost covering last year and another 4% this year - but will fight plans for a raise next year.

A big raise for bus and subway workers is rolling down the tracks.

The MTA will agree to follow an August arbitration ruling and give workers a 4% salary boost covering last year and another 4% this year - but will fight plans for a raise next year.

The decision could mean a more than \$100 million payday for workers, who have been waiting about five months for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to abide by the three-year deal awarded by a state arbitration panel, the Daily News has learned.

The MTA lost a court bid last month to have the three-year contract tossed out, but hasn't totally given up the fight.

The authority, which says the contract is too costly, will file a limited appeal seeking to stop a more than 3% raise in the third year and a provision that would lower worker contributions for health insurance coverage, transit officials told The News.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder, who started in the top job in October, couldn't be reached for comment Monday night. A spokesman declined to comment.

The contract - with raises totaling about 11.3% - will cost the MTA an additional \$

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350 million over the life of the contract, the MTA has said.

Union officials said last night that transit workers aren't jumping for joy.

"They're going to take the money cautiously and view this as another attempt to manipulate a lawfully awarded contract," Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelson said.

It was not clear when the raise - along with a hefty retroactive check - would be coming.

He predicted the MTA would lose the appeals court challenge expected to be filed this week.

The new MTA chairman needs to "stop wasting taxpayers' money in a futile pursuit to knock down" the contract, Samuelson said.

Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Peter Sherwood last month rejected MTA arguments that the arbitration panel made legal and factual errors.

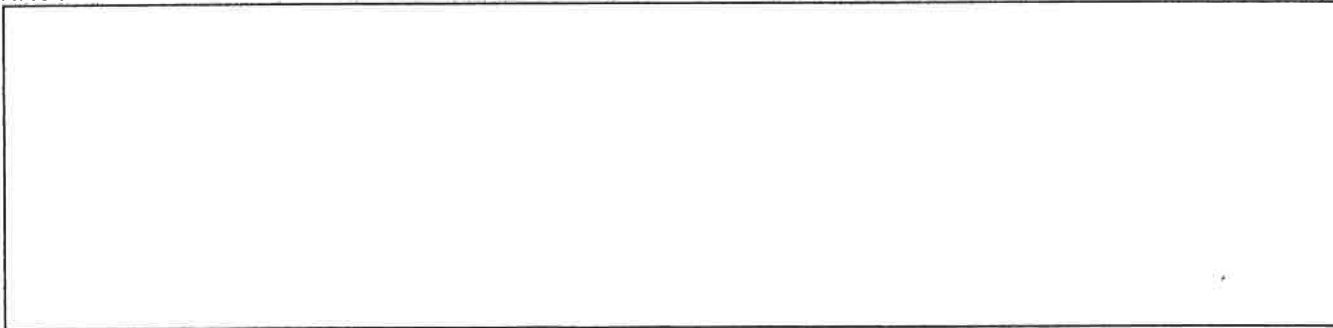
He found the panel gave plausible and rational justification for the contract,

including that the raises followed a pattern of 4% annual increases the Bloomberg administration has given several municipal unions.

"In the current economic environment, the award ... is a rich package, but it is not unique," Sherwood wrote.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)

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orted Mr. Sorrenti, and was told and another post.

the end of 2002, Mr. Connors filed a complaint with the Police Department charging that Mr. Hall had discriminated against Mr. Sorrenti because of his perceived sexual orientation.

After being contacted by an aide of Mr. Hall, Mr. Connors put in for a transfer. While he was waiting for it, a decision said, his work hours and

### Will Fill Jobs

## CITY CERTIFICATIONS

Department of Citywide Administrative Services has certified lists of the eligible lists below for appointments and promotions in cities, subject to the 1-in-3 rule. Some of the appointments and promotions may already have been made.

### OPEN COMPETITIVE

MANAGEMENT AUDITOR—Nos. 1 on List 0131 for 3 jobs at Housing Authority

### PROMOTION

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER—27 between Nos. 5 and 38 on List for 2 jobs in Fire Department.

COLLECTION SUPERVISOR (REV.)—7 eligibles between Nos. 4 and 12 on List 6525 for 3 jobs at New York City.

TRAIN DISPATCHER—201 eligibles between Nos. 178 and 384 on List 5522 for 3 jobs at NYC Transit.

### Rights Law

Police spokesman Paul J. Browne told the Times that Mr. Sorrenti's perceived sexual orientation was never an issue in the denial of a transfer to Youth Services, but he did not further explain it.

Mr. Sorrenti, who has also left the NYPD, sued separately and won \$500,000 in damages in 2006. Ms. Albinio and Mr. Connors received similar-sized awards.

## Rule City Improperly Fired DOT Worker Who Couldn't Urinate

By MARK TOOR

When you've got to go, you've got to go—except when you can't go. And the inability to go is insufficient grounds for the city to refuse to hire someone, a court has decided.

The case involved Clifton Gibbon, who worked for the city Department of Transportation as an Assistant Highway Repairer on a seasonal basis from 2001 through March 2006. At that point, he was required to take a drug test but was unable to provide a urine sample.

### Two Chances, No Result

"According to protocol, once [Mr. Gibbon] was unable to produce the required amount of urine, he was given another chance, and again, even after drinking water, could not produce sufficient urine," according to the Jan. 25

(Continued on Page 9)

The judge also advised the jurors that any expert testimony they heard should not dictate their decision, but should be taken as part of the evidence, and that the jurors must go where the evidence leads them.

### JOSEPH GRAFFAGNINO

Firefighters Robert Beddia, 53, of Engine Company 24, and Joseph

(Continued on Page 9)

## MTA Loses It Bid To Block Pay Hikes For 35,000 Workers

By FLORA FAIR

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority must pay about 35,000 workers a retroactive 3-percent wage increase and reimburse their health-care spending under a state Court of Appeals ruling last week that effectively ends the agency's two-year legal battle to block the benefits, which were awarded in an arbitration deal.

The ruling upheld a December 2010 appellate decision, as well as one from a lower court in December 2009 that orders the MTA to adhere to the terms of the award for Transport Workers Union Local 100.

### Retroactive to January

The MTA now owes a retroactive 3-percent increase from Jan. 16, 2011 for New York City Transit and Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority members. For MTA Bus members, the increase became effective on April 1.

MTA employees will also pay less toward their health care, which will be reduced from 1.53 percent to a flat 1.5-percent contribution based on a 40-



JOHN SAMUELSEN: 'An important win.'

hour work week, with full retroactivity from Aug. 15, 2009 for Transit and Surface, and Dec. 1, 2009 for MTA Bus.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen

(Continued on Page 11)

## Union Call

(Continued from Page 1)

Emergency Medical Service and sit workers while they are. This raises the penalty for a year of imprisonment for a meanor assault from 3½ to 4 as 25 years in prison (for ca other than Police Officer, the mum term is 15 years).

"Other agencies have it," I poli said. "We deal directly v public on a regular basis ar things are going to happen." The April 1 attack occurred Flatbush, Brooklyn, as Sa Workers Vincent DeBlasio an ly Watson were emptying tra

### Driver Said Pull Over

"A car pulled up directly be and the driver said 'I have to g the block, pull over,'" Mr. DeBl in an interview. Ms. Watson driver they had no place to p but they would move as fast a ble, and he responded by curs threatening her, Mr. DeBlasio Then, Mr. DeBlasio said, th made a call on his cell pho man—"about 6 feet, 190, 200 l—came up and punched him face. He fell to the street and head, he said, then tried to g observe the man's clothes so l give police a description, but t ran away too quickly.

Police officers who respon rested the driver of the car, Rink, 28, who had served five

# Schools and Instruction

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## PREPARE FOR

THE SUFFERN COUNTY THE NEW YORK CITY

# They're Perfect Together For Punishing Us All

By MEL LEWY

The Governor, the Mayor and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority all take your money for services to be provided. Perfect together, they are taking more and providing less. Their usual excuse is that there is a budget deficit. It doesn't have to be true, but they will make it so.

Let us start with the Governor. In his budget he claims that there will be no additional taxes. Then the first thing he does is scrap the millionaires tax, creating a \$5.3-billion hole. Then to close this hole, he tells the state civil-service workers there will be a salary freeze. He then goes ahead and cuts funding for education, so Teachers will lose jobs, resulting in larger classes. This will make it harder for kids to learn. And by the way, it will also result in an increase in the state's payout in unemployment compensation and loss of these laid-off workers' income-tax revenue. Then the Governor retains the head of the MTA. He fits the profile. Spend more, get less (this will be gone into later).

Now for the Mayor. He claims a multi-billion-dollar deficit (even though the city's equivalent of the Congressional Budget Office says there is a multi-billion-dollar surplus). He then pays for ads trying to overturn civil service. His first step is to try to overturn the principle of seniority by claiming that veteran Teachers are not as good as the younger ones. He will lay off thousands of veteran Teachers to make up for the state's funding shortfall. He will get the additional benefit of getting rid of the higher-paid Teachers, thus giving the Mayor more money for education consultants (beholden to him) and more Charter Schools (also beholden to him) where the head of a 600-pupil school can make as much as the Chancellor of Education of the million-pupil school system. If successful at weakening this part of the Civil Service, he will push on to the rest of the city's Civil Service. He can then fund more projects like CityTime (it doesn't matter if they don't work) and the extension of the number 7 line to New Jersey (which will not benefit the citizens of New Jersey).

Example: When John Simpson asked for 500 more personnel (in December of 1984), he was ordered to get rid of 2,500 people. NYC Transit, which carries 90 percent of the passengers, has less than one-third of the board members and gets only 50 percent of external revenue. To make matters worse, NYCT's engineering staff has been cut back to where too much of its in-house work is to see that consultants get paid on time. The highly qualified NYCT engineering staff is frozen out of high-profile projects (2nd Avenue, Fulton Street Hub, etc.) by a new agency (Capital Construction Company). This agency decides which work will be done by in-house staff or farmed out at more-exorbitant costs to consultants. It decided on much more costly and wasteful projects (2nd Ave and East Side Connection) which were given to consultants. These very high-cost alternatives (compared to the in-house solutions) then fueled the MTA's debt service, which then generated an increase in the fare. Up till now, the Capital Construction Company decisions only cost more money. Their latest decisions on hardening parts of the MTA's infrastructure against terrorism by use of consultants have weakened what they were supposed to protect. Basic engineering principles were not followed. Worse, the consultant agencies were not kept apprised of what was going on.

The Governor, the Mayor and the MTA are perfect together, and we will pay.

Mr. Levy, a retired veteran of 35 years in the transit system who monitored the structural integrity of the subway system's below-river tunnels, is the former chairman of the Civil Service Technical Guild's New York City Transit chapter.

## LOOKING FOR A GREAT DEAL?

The Chief Leader is offering several new packages to teachers who...

# Add HHC Medicaid Funds

(Continued from Page 3)

do chart reviews and assessments before the doctor approves a refill. When you can do this for 30 patients, you save 30 visits, many hours of unnecessary travel and wait time for the patient, and can ensure providers use their time more efficiently and spend it with patients who really need it."

## More Than Just a Doctor

David Stevens, a Director at Gouverneur Healthcare Services in Lower Manhattan, said, "Patients know they have a team caring for them; it's not just about the doctor. They can have appointments with a nurse and see a Patient Care Associate to get help navigating the system. And when too much time has passed between visits, they will get a call and hear someone say, 'How are you doing? We have not seen you for a while.'"

The hospitals and community centers that qualified for the funds met several safety and quality standards, including giving patients the knowledge and tools they need for self-management of their health, care coordination, evidence-based guidelines for chronic conditions, and performance reporting and improvement.

The eleven hospitals are Bellevue, Coney Island, Elmhurst, Harlem, Jacoby, Kings County, Lincoln, Metropolitan, North Central, Bronx, Queens and Woodhull. The six community centers are Gouverneur Healthcare Services, Cumberland Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Segundo Ruiz Belvis Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center, East New York Diagnostic and Treatment Center, and Renaissance Healthcare Network Diagnostic and Treatment Center at Sydenham.

# MTA Raise Appeal Derailed

(Continued from Page 2)

called the court's decision "an important win for transit workers and the collective-bargaining process."

## Got 11% Hike Over 3 Years

The current contract was awarded in 2009 and includes 11 percent in total pay raises over three years. Two previous appeals by the MTA for raises in 2009 and 2010 were rejected by lower courts. The estimated \$77-million price tag for this current wage and health-care bump could be a financial blow to the MTA, which is already facing budget shortfalls, a loss of state funds and pressure from legislators to forgo its lucrative payroll tax. But Mr. Samuelsen said the MTA

could have avoided high court costs by simply agreeing to the terms from the beginning.

"The MTA has spent the past two years in a costly series of challenges that they knew they could not win," he said. "We're extremely happy that the legal fight is behind us, and that the workers will begin receiving the wage increase they so richly deserve."

Mr. Samuelsen added that the ruling validates Local 100's decision to resist MTA attempts to hold transit jobs hostage over the pay increase. "Most of the members laid off last year are back on the job, or soon will be," he said, "and they, as well as thousands of their brother and sister transit workers, will all enjoy the benefits of the union's fight to preserve our contract and our wage increase."

# Ohio on L Gov. K Rights

By MARY

Ohio is the new Republican Gov. John Kasich's first day in office. He said it is necessary to have a bill March 31. He said it is necessary to have a bill March 31. He said it is necessary to have a bill March 31.

## Public Could R

The Ohio law prohibits collective-bargaining police officers and firefighters negotiations and pensions, lets goers decline to pay unions, permits school governments to offer when contract allows communities would raise would increase it down in a referendum.

We Are Ohio, an organization by Democrats and laboring for a statewide referendum in November. "This very big campaign," spokeswoman Willard said. The organizing millions of dollars to end, and union members signatures to put it Dale Butland, a political unions, told the Dealer that he believed the bill, which includes commerce and business unions and to the Dem an existential threat, "h

# Environm

(Continued from

- 94 Philip C. Fotopoulos
- 95 Brian C. Lee
- 96 Noel A. Roman
- 97 Andrazej L. Siedlik
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- 99 Christopher M. Keegan



THE CHIEF-LEADER, FRIDAY, JANUARY 22, 2010

*Seeks Unity, Will Press MTA*

## New TWU Leader Binding Wounds and Fighting Cuts

By ARI PAUL

Changing work environments can be a challenge. Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen has spent the last three weeks adjusting to working days—he was a Track Inspector working night shifts for several years prior to his election in December—and traded the dark tunnels of the subway for a roomy office in the union's Upper West Side headquarters.

Elected as a dissident fortified by the members' anger against then-President Roger Toussaint, Mr. Samuelsen kept a few trophies. On his desk was a model of a Northern Ireland wall with the phrase "You are now entering Free Derry," a nod to his Irish Republicanism. He also displayed Mr. Toussaint's presidential parking sign, which he said he would get rid of soon.

### Puts Election Foe on Staff

His Take Back Our Union slate nearly swept the election, and while Mr. Samuelsen gave several of his candidates who lost their election bids—including TA Surface vice president candidate Harry Wills, who was defeated by incumbent and Toussaint loyalist Stephan Thomas—staff jobs, he pledged to work with the allies of the old administration and has given a job to his opponent in the race, Curtis Tate.

"He'll be doing political work," Mr. Samuelsen said during a recent interview, noting that the move will help end the union's infighting.

Internal matters have taken up most of Mr. Samuelsen's time during the transition, and he has vowed to cut non-essential spending. Mr. Samuelsen has put most of the division chairmen on union payroll, though some stayed on employer-based release time, which limits what kind of representation an officer can do. An officer on union payroll can participate in dues-collection drives, while those on transit release time cannot, for example.

"If you were elected as a chair you should be on the union payroll to ensure that the members of that division are going to have proper repre-

sentation," he said. "We have 15 divisions and 15 chairmen have now been offered a union payroll job and nearly every one of them has taken it. I think there might be three that have chosen not to. And that's not for political reasons, but because they have the ability to make money, more money than the union could pay them."

### Still Waiting on Contract Hikes

But at the dawn of 2010, the union is scrambling under its new leadership to prepare to engage with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which has sought layoffs and a restructuring of the workforce. In addition, New York City Transit members have yet to receive wage increases under an arbitration award retroactive to last January granting 11-percent

(Continued on Page 9)

(Continued on reverse)



The Chief-Leader/Michel Friang

**MENDING FENCES WHILE GIRDING FOR BATTLE:** Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen, in an effort to end infighting in the union, gave the former acting president he defeated, Curtis Tate, a full-time lobbying job. He said that he would have a working relationship with Metropolitan Transportation Authority management, but vowed to fight layoffs and push for worker safety measures.

# Samuelsen Binds Wounds, Fights Cuts

(Continued from Page 1)

raises over three years, as the MTA unsuccessfully challenged it in court; it has yet to announce whether it will appeal the lower court's decision.

It is often the case when rabble-rousing union dissidents get elected that they tone down their rhetoric, because the nature of being a union president requires a working relationship with management. Mr. Samuelsen long criticized Mr. Toussaint's self-described partnership with both MTA and NYC Transit managers, but he has already met with MTA Chairman and CEO Jay Walder and NYC Transit President Thomas Prendergast, and said that he is laying the groundwork for a good relationship with the transit heads.

## Start Off Right

"I do not expect to have an antagonistic relationship with them," Mr. Samuelsen said. "I'm not the kind of guy that's going to get into personal insults with them back and forth, which may have happened in the past. That type of thing is not going to contribute to a sour relationship on my end. But then again, I do recognize that my job is to lead New York City Transit workers, and to protect and advance our wages and benefits. And to that extent we have diametrically opposite positions."

Mr. Samuelsen has vowed to vigorously fight the MTA's plan to cut 700 transit jobs. He backs a City Council-proposed plan to help the agency's financial problems without instituting cuts, by using 10 percent of Federal stimulus money for operational costs. In addition to the layoffs, the current budget plan calls for the elimination of two subway lines, several bus routes, and free MetroCards to public school students, all of which have riled rider groups.

Mr. Samuelsen said that Local 100 will work more closely with rider advocates than it did under the Toussaint administration.

"We have a community organizer right now that's working hand-in-hand with various groups," he said. "He's very involved with the student groups and community groups that are rightfully opposing the stripping of MetroCards from New York City school kids. We're prepared to fully involve ourselves with the community. Our interests are one and the same."

## Wage Delay 'A Severe Injustice'

Notwithstanding Mr. Samuelsen's plans to maintain good relationships with management, he noted that the MTA's challenge to the arbitration award has left a sour taste in the mouths of Local 100 members.

"Transit workers want their wage increases," Mr. Samuelsen said blunt-



**CURTIS TATE: Accepts olive branch.**

ly. "They've been dealt a severe injustice by the MTA and by New York State in the withholding of these wage increases. The wage package is far inferior to what the established citywide pattern was. The arbitrator wrote the staggering of the wage increases and the loss of retroactive pay in the arbitration award itself in order to ensure that the actual wages that transit workers earned off the arbitration award would come in the neighborhood of 8.5 percent, rather than 11. [He was referring to the cash cost of the deal being less than the actual increase in pay rates.] And even in light of that it still wasn't good enough for the MTA and the state. So transit workers feel betrayed by their employer. It's only served to exacerbate an already-strained relationship. In terms of the budget, transit workers are used to the MTA saying they have no money."

At the last MTA board meeting, Mr. Walder along with several board members blamed labor costs for the bulk of the agency's financial woes, with the other villain being Albany legislators who have failed to come up with viable long-term funding streams for transportation in the down-state region.

## A Little Help From Her Friend

Mr. Samuelsen rolled his eyes at the suggestion from Mr. Walder and board member Nancy Shevell, a transportation industry executive best known as the girlfriend of Paul McCartney, that "archaic work rules" were crippling the agency's ability to function efficiently.

"She wouldn't even know where to find a copy our contract let alone point to a work rule," he said. "She's just another rich businesswoman who doesn't think transit workers should be treated fairly. She should get Paul McCartney to bail out the MTA."

Mr. Samuelsen's challenge as president will be to address the concerns of workers in a myriad of titles. One



**JAY WALDER: Stance on raises riles members.**

of his campaign promises was to aid the often under-represented and smaller faction of the union, the Private Bus Lines Division. He said last week that the union is planning on organizing non-union school bus companies and vowed to fight several decertification drives in Local 100-represented companies.

While Mr. Samuelsen's TBOU slate won that division, the incumbent vice presidents succeeded in the two divisions representing NYC Transit Bus Operators and Bus Maintainers. He vowed to stop the MTA's efforts to consolidate MTA Bus with TA Surface and the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operation Authority.

## Vision for Track Safety

As for Mr. Samuelsen's home division—Maintenance of Way—the main issue is track safety. After two Track Workers were killed within days of each other in 2007, Local 100 pushed for a comprehensive track safety bill that would have established concrete work regulations.

The MTA strongly opposed such a bill, and when Mr. Toussaint agreed to a compromise that created a track safety task force consisting of the NYC Transit and Local 100 presidents that same year, Mr. Samuelsen decried it as a massive sell-out.

Two and half years later, Mr. Samuelsen contended it was too early to say whether track safety was going to be on the union's political agenda, but noted that Local 100 would still aggressively push for better track safety measures through both the task force and the joint committees overseeing track safety established after the two deaths.

"We're going to work in that framework right now," he said. "We haven't made a decision on whether to pursue the old safety bill as it was written. That'll come. We have a little bit of time, at least, to do that."



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

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# COLLISION COURSE

## New transit CEO. New labor chief. No money. Let the sparks fly

BY DANIEL MASSEY

LAST MONTH, John Samuelsen was wearing a hard hat and a safety vest, repairing tracks in the bowels of the subway system. Now, in suit and tie, the new president of Transport

Workers Union Local 100 has a different kind of fix-it job: uniting an organization racked by internal strife and financial troubles in order to fend off layoffs and work-rule changes promised by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's new chairman and chief executive.

The new MTA head, Jay Walder, faces a challenging repair job of his own. He began work in October, set on improving customer service and bringing New York's mass-transit system into the 21st century. But earlier this month, he acknowledged that the MTA's deteriorating fi-

nances have forced him to scale back those ambitions and instead focus on pinching every penny to help plug a \$400 million gap in the agency's \$12 billion operating budget.

"We have to assure the public that we're using every dollar we get

See **COLLISION** on Page 20

(Continued on reverse)

# Collision course

Continued from Page 1

as effectively as possible," Mr. Walder says. "It would be hard to say the MTA is doing that right now."

To increase efficiency, Mr. Walder says, he must cut jobs "significantly," change "archaic" work rules and institute service cuts, among other fixes. However, Mr. Samuelsen intends to defend his members. And that sets up the union leader from Brooklyn and the transit chief from Queens for a high-voltage battle. The two men insist they're committed to working out a solution, but their opening salvos have been uncompromising.

"This bureaucrat ... looks at our jobs, our neighborhoods, as a line on a ledger that will balance his books," Mr. Samuelsen told TWU members at a Martin Luther King Jr. Day forum. "I have news for Mr. Walder: If you move against our livelihoods, you will have a fight on your hands."

Any such fight will be led by the 42-year-old son of a meat lugger and a union pension fund director, who started as a track worker in 1993. Mr. Samuelsen was initially friendly with union President Roger Toussaint, but he became persona non grata in 2005 when he challenged Mr. Toussaint's decision to sell the union's West End Avenue headquarters and organized opposition to the contract settlement that ended the transit strike that year. He earned credibility among those who were tiring of their president.

## Rough-and-tumble union election

"JOHN BRINGS a lot of experiences to the table," says New York State AFL-CIO President Denis Hughes. "He was a rank-and-file activist, he held union office and he understands the MTA very well."

Mr. Samuelsen's election campaign played up the notion that Local 100 had become too cozy with the MTA under Mr. Toussaint and his handpicked successor, Curtis Tate. It was a rough-and-tumble contest. Yet one of Mr. Samuelsen's first moves as president was to offer Mr. Tate a job



MIND THE BUDGET GAP:  
Transit union chief  
John Samuelsen.

lobbying in Albany. More than a dozen other opponents were also offered positions.

"If we don't march forward in unison," Mr. Samuelsen explains, "we're going to be defeated by the MTA."

He's also had to get a grip on Local 100's finances. The headquarters sale netted about \$46 million, but only \$26 million remains. One reason: Union officials used the proceeds to cover operating expenses when dues couldn't be collected via an automatic payroll deduction, a penalty for the illegal 2005 strike. Local 100 ran a \$2 million deficit last year, Mr. Samuelsen says.

Mr. Walder, 50, who took over the MTA in October, has his own money woes. Some 700 planned layoffs were unveiled last month, affecting mostly station agents and bus operators. More could be coming. Work rules that "stand in the way of achieving the most effective outcomes" also must be modified, Mr. Walder says, declining to offer specifics. One perennially contentious idea would cut train crews from two to one.

"I always found him to be someone with strong principles, but who you can talk to," says transit advocate Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign, who knew Mr. Walder during the CEO's earlier stint as the MTA's chief financial officer. "That's my hope for the approach he'll have with the unions."

As managing director for finance and development of Transport for London, Mr. Walder frequently butted heads with members of London's transit union. But he won praise for introducing a state-of-the-art electronic fare card that he hopes to bring to New York, and he was credited with finding \$2 billion

in cost-cutting measures.

He's on a similar savings quest here, because an already dismal 2009, during which ridership plummeted as the economy tanked, ended with a crippling coda in December. First, the state revealed it would cut funding to the MTA by \$143 million. Then came word that the payroll tax instituted last year as part of Albany's MTA bailout could bring in \$200 million less than thought. Finally, a court shot down an appeal of an arbitration ruling that awarded workers raises of more than 11% over three years, leaving the MTA with a \$91 million increase in its 2010 payroll.

## Damages add up

"WHEN YOU PUT it all together, that introduced a \$400 million shortfall in an incredibly short period of time," Mr. Walder says. "When you sit in my shoes, you have to deal with that."

Since labor constitutes 58% of the agency's 2010 expenses, or about \$7 billion, layoffs would seem to be an obvious target, although a plan to overhaul the MTA's massive administrative side is also in the works.

"I don't want to threaten anyone's livelihood," Mr. Walder says. "I'd like our work force to be well-trained and well-compensated, but I want it to be a highly productive work force, too."

The MTA plans a further appeal of the third year's raise that was part of the arbitration ruling, a move that has inflamed tensions with the union.

Finding common ground was a hallmark of previous agency CEO Elliot Sander's approach to labor relations, Mr. Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign observes.

"The last thing we want," he says, "is the tension and chaos that surrounded the 2005 transit strike." ■



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

## OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

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*President*

**Israel Rivera**  
*Secretary Treasurer*

**Benita Johnson**  
*Recording Secretary*

**Angel Giboyeaux**  
*Administrative VP*

January 26, 2010

Mr. Jay Walder  
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer  
MTA  
347 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Chairman Walder:

On behalf of New York City's riding public, I invite you to join Transport Workers Union Local 100 in Washington, D.C. to lobby in support of federal transit operating assistance. Faced with budget deficits the MTA proposes to address with doomsday service reductions, it is imperative we receive more transit funding, including federal assistance to help fill budget gaps. To this end, TWU Local 100 is assembling a broad coalition of elected officials, labor unions and advocacy groups – including the Coalition of MTA Employee Unions, the Straphangers Campaign and Tri-State Transportation Campaign – to lobby elected officials in Washington, D.C. in early February 2010. We would like very much to have the MTA as an active partner.

As you are keenly aware, the funding crisis affecting the MTA is being replicated all over the country. Transit agencies, from California to Georgia, are being forced to raise fares and/or slash service as a result of dwindling local revenue sources precisely at a time when working people need economic relief. Numerous agencies have already used federal stimulus dollars to keep service cuts and layoffs at bay. For New Yorkers, federal operating assistance would stave off the MTA's plans to eliminate entire train lines, bus routes, and express bus service, as well as shut down station booths vital to the safety of our system. We urge the MTA to follow in the footsteps of these agencies and use 10 percent of its stimulus funds to maintain its existing service levels.

Our public transportation network is not only responsible but essential for the economic well being of the Greater New York Metropolitan region. Our unique and unparalleled transit service is what propels New York City as the economic capital of the U.S. Unfortunately, with the Authority's current funding mechanism tied to the whim of the economy, any economic downturn presents itself as an immediate crisis with long-term and perilous consequences.

While there is a real need for long-term transportation reform that addresses the inequity in federal funding for highway (80 percent) infrastructure at the expense of public transportation (20 percent) systems, we need to act now to find a short-term solution to address the MTA's current crisis. We echo your sentiments; in these uncertain times, a reduction in service will certainly choke our city's path toward economic stability and recovery. New Yorkers are depending on us to find an alternative.

Page 2 of 2  
Chairman Jay Walder  
1/26/10

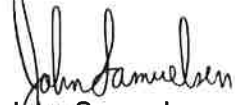
A jobs bill currently under consideration by Congress also offers the opportunity of new transit funding. U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand has just drafted a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, asking for the inclusion of \$15 billion for transit investments within legislation designed to spur job creation. This is also worthy of our strong support. As Sen. Gillibrand notes in her letter, for every \$1 billion invested in public transportation, 36,000 jobs are created.

I urge you to join us in Washington, D.C. to rally behind additional transit federal operating assistance incorporated either in a Jobs Bill, in the next transportation reauthorization bill, or as a separate piece of legislation. We urge the U.S. Senate to follow in the footsteps of the U.S. House of Representatives and enact legislation similar to H.R. 2746 which calls for permanent operating assistance.

Under a transit-friendly administration, it is imperative we act now. Elected officials need to hear from us to fully grasp the consequences of a poorly funded transit system. Representing the largest transit agency in the country, there is no question that the time is now for New York to show leadership on this issue.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



John Samuelson  
President  
Transport Workers Union, Local 100

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afl-cio





## MTA execs who ordered service cuts are clueless 'bean counters' says transport union chief

By Pete Donohue

Daily News Staff Writer

January 27, 2010

[http://www.nydailynews.com/ny\\_local/2010/01/27/2010-01-](http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/01/27/2010-01-27_mta_execs_who_ordered_service_cuts_are_clueless_bean_counters_says_transport_uni.html#ixzz0dv5h0g5g)

[27\\_mta\\_execs\\_who\\_ordered\\_service\\_cuts\\_are\\_clueless\\_bean\\_counters\\_says\\_transport\\_uni.html#ixzz0dv5h0g5g](http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/2010/01/27/2010-01-27_mta_execs_who_ordered_service_cuts_are_clueless_bean_counters_says_transport_uni.html#ixzz0dv5h0g5g)



John Samuelsen, the new president of TWU Local 100, is scathing in his assessment of the brains behind the service cuts (Siegel for News)

MTA executives are a bunch of clueless "bean counters" for planning service cuts while funding non-essential projects, the transit union chief charged Wednesday.

Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen joined the Straphangers Campaign outside the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Madison Ave. headquarters Wednesday to criticize the authority's 2010 budget.

The litany of cuts include eliminating or scaling back dozens of bus routes.

"This document was obviously written by accountants, bean counters, people who obviously don't ride our system and who don't understand that these cuts are negatively impacting hundreds of thousands of New York's working families and their children," Samuelsen, who took office earlier this month, said. "They're clueless."

Samuelsen, whose members face layoffs, said the MTA should set aside projects like countdown clocks that authority brass want to install along bus routes.

The electronic message boards would tell riders how many minutes they can expect to wait for the next bus.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder has said he recognizes the service cuts will result in longer, and in some cases more crowded, trips for riders.

But he said the reductions are necessary because of state funding reductions and shrinking tax revenues.

If Gov. Paterson's proposed budget is included, MTA revenues are \$500 million below what the state projected they would be just last spring, Walder said after this morning's MTA board meeting.

Still, Walder - a big proponent of the countdown clocks - said "we shouldn't let the economic downturn be an excuse for not improving service."



## New TWU head gearing up for layoff battle

By Benjamin Kabak



Recently elected TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson poses outside of MTAHQ on Wednesday. (Photo via the *Daily News*)

As part of the MTA's planned service cuts, the authority is trying to spread the pain around. We know that Transit is trying to minimize the disruptive nature of their necessary cuts. We know that the MTA's administration budget will be reduced by 10 percent and that everyone will have to take a payout. We also know that the agency is going to try to eliminate 700 union jobs. The TWU will not, according to new president John Samuelson, go down without a fight.

Speaking in front of MTA Headquarters on Wednesday shortly before the authority's board met to discuss the service cuts, Samuelson lobbed some charges at the executives. "This document was obviously written by accountants, bean counters, people who obviously don't ride our system and who don't understand that these cuts are negatively impacting hundreds of thousands of New York's working families and their children," Samuelson said. "They're clueless."

Samuelson, according to Pete Donohue, also called upon the MTA to eschew their countdown clock program in favor of covering operating deficits. It is this attitude that will result in a transit policy and a transit system stuck in neutral, and as we know, the agency as no plans right now to shift any capital money to cover its operating deficit.

At a time when the MTA is suffering in the eyes of a skeptical public, his rhetoric rings a certain bell. He knows that the MTA's proposed service cuts were written by people very much in tune with the system. That's why the proposal is designed to limit the number of passengers and riders it impacts. He knows that MTA officials aren't clueless. But he also knows that he's going to have to fight for the jobs. Right now, despite the fact that wage increases for TWU workers is contributing to the MTA's deficit gap, Samuelson is clearly winning the war of the words.

On a more practical level, though, Samuelson and new MTA CEO and Chair Jay Walder are going to try to work together to address the MTA's deficit. *City Hall News'* Chris Bragg profiled Samuelson yesterday, and his piece adds a level of complexity missing in the *Daily News'* coverage of the TWU head's public comments.

Samuelson and Walder recently met for the first time, and the two have pledged, according to Bragg, to work together. Walder — known for being hard on labor during his days in London — had a more optimistic assessment of the potential relationship between the two men. "He has pledged to [work together], and I have pledged to do so," he said. "But we're both new to our jobs, so we're finding our way." But Samuelson countered, "We have diametrically opposite positions on a whole array of issues. It's not going to be personally hostile. But we're not going to just roll over, either."

Samuelson is taking over the TWU after a few tumultuous years of labor relations with the MTA. Roger Toussaint's decision to strike in 2005 cost the union dearly, and Samuelson vows to avoid making the same mistakes of capitulation. Still, some observers think the two new heads will see a thaw in their early discourse. "Roger Toussaint came into office with a reputation as a firebrand kind of guy too," Bill Henderson, executive director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, said to Bragg. "Eventually, the relationship changed."

Right now, Samuelson's job is to save 700 of the 37,000 workers over whom he is in charge from getting the axe. He'll try everything in his power to save 1.8 percent of his workforce from the unemployment lines because he knows what giving into the MTA will mean. As the authority fights for its money, the war — one that will probably end on a reconciliatory note — is just getting started.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

*Department of Communications*

On A Roll After TWU Head Victory, Samuelsen Refuses To Roll Over... <http://www.cityhallnews.com/newyork>



## On A Roll After TWU Head Victory, Samuelsen Refuses To Roll Over On MTA

**Samuelsen lays tracks for more democratic Local 100, though doubts persist**

By Chris Bragg



MTA chairman Jay Walder and Transport Workers Union Local 100 president John Samuelsen, both new to their jobs, got together for their first meeting in mid-January.

On the agenda: the broad disagreements about the MTA's budget policies over the next year and what that will mean for the union's workforce.

The day after the meeting Walder said he felt he would be able to work with the new leader of the city's subway and bus workers, given all his stridently anti-MTA public rhetoric.

"He has pledged to do so, and I have pledged to do so," said Walder, projecting optimism. "But we're both new to our jobs, so we're finding our way."

Samuelsen offered a darker assessment.

"We have diametrically opposite positions on a whole array of issues," Samuelsen said. "It's not going to be personally hostile. But we're not going to just roll over, either."

The new head of the 37,000-member union, who got his start as a track inspector, won election after a heated campaign that accused the previous administration of being too close to the MTA management— an assertion that might come as a surprise to New Yorkers who lived through the 2005 transit strike led by his predecessor, Roger Toussaint.

At the same time, Samuelsen comes into the job at a time when the MTA is reeling from a \$400 million budget gap and is threatening layoffs.

Samuelsen said that in recent years the union's anti-democratic leadership structure made it so the union actually was often fighting itself rather than fighting the MTA.

"Once we started doing that, we had no strength to compel management," Samuelsen said, in an interview at the office he recently

took over from Toussaint. "So the only alternative was to try and develop a relationship with the company and curry favor."

That line of argument helped Samuelsen handily defeat Toussaint's hand-picked successor, Curtis Tate, in early December. He has since appointed Tate to the union's political action committee, in a gesture toward this newly democratic spirit.

Samuelsen also enters office on the heels of an arbitrator's ruling that Local 100 members should receive 11-percent raises over the next three years, despite the MTA's financial woes.

In the MTA budget released in December, 700 layoffs of unionized workers were proposed. But instead of laying off union members, Samuelsen believes money should instead be diverted from the MTA's capital budget in order to cover an operational deficit. Walder, however, is adamantly opposed to the idea and has spent much of his time looking for inefficiencies in the workforce.

Samuelsen was readying for a fight against management and he said that his experience so far with Walder has only reinforced a reputation that preceded him.

"Walder's reputation from his experience in London is that he will come into town and try to balance his budget on the backs of organized labor," Samuelsen said.

As the relationship between Walder and Samuelsen develops, others note that Toussaint also came into office with a strongly anti-MTA message, only to develop a relationship with MTA leadership in later years. Bill Henderson, executive director at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, suggested the same dynamic could occur eventually between Samuelsen and Walder.

"Roger Toussaint came into office with a reputation as a firebrand kind of guy too," Henderson said. "Eventually, the relationship changed."

As the MTA goes through a period of fiscal crisis, Samuelsen said, his main task is now to empower the union rank and file politically in order to fight expected layoffs.

Samuelsen says he has personal experience with the anti-democratic nature of the union under Toussaint. During the early years of Toussaint's tenure, Samuelsen worked his way into the president's inner circle. But they had a falling out just weeks before the disastrous 2005 strike over Toussaint's decision to try selling TWU Local 100's longtime headquarters on West End Avenue, even as negotiations with the city were growing intense.

At a meeting of the union's leadership, Samuelsen said the sale was a distraction from the real work at hand, and should be tabled until after the contract situation was resolved. For his disloyalty, Toussaint stripped Samuelsen of his well-paying administrative position and sent Samuelsen back to his old job as a track inspector.

"And that's how we got here today," said Samuelsen.

During the campaign for Toussaint's replacement, the two were openly hostile towards one another. Toussaint at one point referred to Samuelsen as "mentally ill."

Samuelsen filed a defamation lawsuit.

With the campaign over, Toussaint, who has taken a position with the national Transit Workers Union, declined to comment about his old nemesis.

"I have no need to speak over Mr. Samuelsen, and I wish them all well," Toussaint said.

Since taking office, Samuelsen has taken steps he believes will make the union more democratic and encourage a healthy level of dissent. He also said that going forward, the union also would spend less money on expensive lobbyists and instead encourage the rank and file to meet with lawmakers and to run for office themselves.

All of this, he said, would help the union more aggressively confront Walder and the MTA.

"I'm a hardened trade union democrat, and I believe in it wholeheartedly," Samuelsen said. "There's no pure power in a system where members are kept in the dark and only a few officials are entitled to make decisions for a 40,000member union."

# Runnin' Scared

Labor

## New Transit Union Crew Hits Hard at Former TWU Leaders, MTA on \$

By Roy Edroso, Friday, Jan. 29 2010 @ 10:51AM

Categories: [Featured](#), [Transportation](#)

The new administration of Transit Workers Union Local 100 -- which swept out the old regime on a Take Back Our Union ticket last year -- is apparently looking back in anger, and leaking details of questionable expenses under the leadership of former Local 100 boss Roger Toussaint and his successor, Curtis Tate. *amNY* has learned that in 2008, the union sprang for a two trips to Great Adventure for thousands of its members, costing \$1.7 million.



Toussaint tells *amNY* that the union had scaled back its annual Great Adventure "Family Day," which it started in 2001, after litigation resulting from the 2005 transit strike ate into its finances, but went ahead with these last hurrahs -- one held last year, another scheduled for later this year -- because they couldn't cancel the reservation. He said union officials have constantly and conscientiously re-negotiated its deals with the amusement park, and that this expense was only coming up as "a political issue more than anything else."

The new administration certainly has good reason to brace up its members' support. Despite some recent concessions from the MTA to the union -- including an agreement to abide by the terms of an arbitration ruling, which it had previously sued to get overturned, and pay four-percent raises for last year and this one -- new TWU boss John Samuelson is working a hard line in his union's salary negotiations with the MTA. He says he expects new MTA president Jay Walder will "try to balance his budget on the backs of organized labor." He's also told members, "I have news for Mr. Walder: If you move against our livelihoods, you will have a fight on your hands."

So it may be that the new TWU leadership seeks to stiffen the membership's resolve by taking a no-business-as-usual stand, and publicly distinguishing itself from the previous administration -- much as President Obama has done with the Bush Administration. Samuelson tells *amNY* "we were truly surprised at the bad state of the union's finances," and his secretary treasurer says the union is going to investigate "all expenditures of the union from the last several years."

Samuelson has personal reasons to hit back at the former leadership, too. During the contentious 2009 elections, he sued them for blocking his campaign efforts and for spreading the word that he was "mentally ill" and a bigot.






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# Toasting the Grammys

Fun bars to take in the show; plus award picks  
**Page 10**



(PHOTOS: GETTY)



Six Flags mascot Mr. Six (AP)

## am NEW YORK EXCLUSIVE Transit union's

# \$2M

# 'Adventure'

Cash-strapped TWU went on spending binge for amusement park getaways **Page 3**



Former TWU President Roger Toussaint

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# Transit union's expensive ride

Cash-strapped TWU paid \$2M for Six Flags trips

amNEW YORK EXCLUSIVE

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Being in a financial hole didn't stop the former leaders of the transit union from signing off on \$2 million for worker getaways at Great Adventure.

According to information obtained by amNewYork, the cash-strapped Transport Workers Union Local 100 dished out big bucks so

its members could ride roller coasters, chow on a buffet and groove to music at the New Jersey fun park.



Samuelson

"We're currently investigating all expenditures of the union from the last several years," said Israel Rivera, TWU's new secretary treasurer.

Attendees got all the food, rides and games they could stomach, but still paid at least \$60 a pop for tickets.

"I can't remember the last time I saw so many union members having such a great time," acting TWU president Curtis Tate said at the time.

Union dues are about \$12



TWU President Roger Toussaint helped organize million-dollar outings for workers. (AMNY)

**\$1.7M**

Cost to close parts of Great Adventure for three trips, provide two meals, rides, games and a concert for thousands of attendees

**\$300,000**

Busing costs

a week and go to lobbying, worker training and staff salaries. Last year, the union had a budget of nearly \$30 million, according to accounting records.

Since 2001, the 38,000-member union has held a "Family Day" for workers and their kin, with dues, donations and tickets covering the cost. The event initially took place at Rye Playland and cost at least

\$500,000 for the park, said former TWU President Roger Toussaint, who helped orchestrate the trips.

After the 2005 transit strike, the TWU scaled back the event, Toussaint said. The venue in 2008, for example, only cost \$79,000, records show. But in 2008, leaders wanted to throw a blowout after some difficult years, agreeing to pay \$1.7 million to close off Great Adventure for thousands of members in June 2009, Toussaint said.

"The rides and the food were unforgettable," said Barry Roberts, the TWU's vice president at the time. Meanwhile, the TWU was confronted by hundreds of

thousands of dollars in unforeseen expenses last year, such as attorney fees for its contract dispute. The union ran deficits of more than \$5 million between 2007 and 2009.

"We were truly surprised at the bad state of the union's finances," said new TWU President John Samuelson.

**WHAT \$2M WILL BUY**

Other things the TWU could have bought with \$2 million

- 999,994 rides on the Central Park Carousel — and 1,000 packages of Dramamine
- 34,483 tickets to Medieval Times in Lyndhurst, N.J.
- 444,444 Gray's Papaya Papaya Recession Specials — two hot dogs and a drink
- 800 box seats behind home plate at Yankee Stadium



Toussaint defended the Great Adventure trip, saying he couldn't cancel the reservation and he agreed to renegotiate the contract after times had gotten tough. Instead of closing the park, the \$1.7 million covered two trips for members in 2009 and a future date this year. Toussaint said the current administration was well aware of the deal.

"This is a political issue more than anything else," Toussaint said.



The Superman ride at Six Flags (AMNY)

**Briefs**

**Girl, 6, an inspiration to thousands, dies of cancer**  
Jasmina Anema, 6, who was stricken with a rare form of leukemia and prompted thousands of people to donate their bone marrow, died Wednesday night at a Manhattan hospital. Jasmina inspired celebrities, including Rihanna and NBA star Paul Pierce, to urge donors to come forward. She also met President Barack Obama.

**New York opposition mounts to 9/11 trials**  
Opposition to holding 9/11 terror trials downtown intensified Thursday. Rep. Peter King introduced a bill to block the Justice Department from trying Guantanamo detainees in federal courts. Gov. David Paterson expressed unease over the venue, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg called Attorney General Eric Holder on Thursday to lobby for moving the trial.

**Woman on run accused of duping brain-damaged man**  
New York authorities are looking for a woman accused of helping herself to the bank accounts of a brain-damaged man she married and then ingratiating herself with a demented 89-year-old to steal more than \$60,000. A judge issued an arrest warrant for Cher Thompson, 27, after she balked at a court appearance Thursday. Thompson was out on \$15,000 bail after her October arrest on charges including grand larceny. (AP)

**MTA: Chicken-lover on train does not work for us**  
A man who gained internet fame for a video of him kissing and smuggling a live chicken on the No. 6 train is not an MTA employee, even though he was wearing an agency shirt, transit officials said Thursday. The MTA does not know who the person is and is investigating the Tuesday incident. Animals are not allowed in the subway system, NYC Transit officials said. (AMNY)



## Leno on 'Oprah': I'm no 'Tonight Show' backstabber

A defensive Jay Leno squirmed through an interview with Oprah Winfrey on Thursday, insisting he's a "good guy" who didn't steal "The Tonight Show" back from Conan O'Brien.

"I wasn't the reason. The reason was the ratings," said Leno of Conan's canning.

Winfrey said her polling indicated 96 percent of people support O'Brien over Leno. Leno, 59, gave up "The Tonight Show"

last May for a 10 p.m. show that floundered. He'll return March 1 to "The Tonight Show."

Winfrey asked the comedian whether he felt selfish in agreeing to the late-night deal, which resulted in O'Brien's departure.

"It was really agonizing," said Leno, who remained somber during the interview and cracked no jokes. He said, "I would spend a lot of time just thinking about it, going, 'I think I'm a good guy. Am I a good guy?'" (EMILY NEGOT)



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Department of Communications

*TWU Local 100 Supports this Call for MTA Budget Reform*

RACING FINAL

Sunday, January 31, 2010

# DAILY NEWS

## MTA is running off the rails: Stimulus money would prevent devastating service cuts

By Christine Quinn, James Vacca and Gene Russianoff

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is struggling with a whopping deficit.

The agency is looking for new efficiencies and administrative overhauls, but it also has proposed three awful steps in 2010. These include \$62 million in drastic service cuts; \$31 million from beginning the phaseout of student MetroCards; and \$40 million in savings from reduced paratransit service.

Millions of subway, bus and commuter riders are the victims, virtually lashed to the tracks as a trainload of misery bears down on them.

We have proposed several reasonable actions to prevent these proposals and are urging the MTA to use federal stimulus funds and other operating

money to prevent service cuts this year.

Here's what should be done:

- Use up to \$121 million in federal stimulus funds for service in 2010. Federal law permits up to 10% of its stimulus funds to be spent on operations. Transit systems around the country - including Atlanta, Chicago, Seattle and St. Louis - are facing the same financial crises and are using stimulus dollars.

- Reprogram for service up to \$50 million in operating funds. Right now, the MTA is planning to spend \$50 million in operating funds on capital projects. At a time when the operating budget is badly pinched, it makes no sense for the MTA to direct operating funds to capital and worsen service cuts.

- Right now, the city provides annually \$45 million, which has held steady since 1995. Until last year, the state gave \$45 million as well. That's been cut in half. The remainder of the \$215 million price tag for student MetroCards is paid for by the MTA. In other big cities, the state and the localities pick up the tab, and both need to step up to the plate here, too. However, the city should not even consider doing so until the state honors its commitment to match the city's contribution.

It's just not correct to say the first two steps are taking transit capital dollars to pay for operations, as the MTA has argued.

Federal law specifically allows a small portion of transportation

*(continued on reverse)*



stimulus money to pay to keep the system running. Congress and President Obama saw it was in the national interest to help maintain service in this troubled economy. Transit agencies around the country are using this option to maintain vital service and jobs.

And this is nothing like the irresponsible budgeting practices of the 1970s. There, the city convinced the federal government to allow the use of \$88 million earmarked for the construction of a subway tunnel as a loan to underwrite the transit fare. Here, we are not talking about a New York exception. We're looking to make use of national policy on stimulus funds.

If the MTA does not tap these two sources, riders will face the worst service cuts in a generation. Here are just a few examples of the misery:

The MTA plans "loading guidelines," which it says now provide seats for 100% of the riders outside the rush.

On seven lines (1, 7, A, F, J, L, M), the guidelines would be changed to provide fewer trains. The agency admits this will result in longer waits for 160,000 riders midday during the week, 150,000 riders on Saturdays and 130,000 riders on Sundays.

The M train would be eliminated at about 25 stops in southern Brooklyn and lower Manhattan. Morning rush-hour service would be halved by eliminating 16 M train runs. The northern end of the M would be replaced by the V train. Since the M platforms are shorter than the V (480 feet instead of 600 feet), the new line would be more crowded.

As for bus service, thousands of riders will be forced to walk many minutes to a different bus line, make extra transfers, suffer longer waits or have to go out of their way to get to their destination.

Customers also will be affected by newly shifted lines. In Councilman James Vacca's district, the Bx14 will

stop running, but the Bx8 and Bx5 will be rerouted.

And the MTA's plan to kill student MetroCards is staggering. The cost for families per child range from about \$343 a year for each half-fare child to as much as \$890 a year for free fare students with after-school activities.

There is a way out. The MTA can use the authority Congress gave it to spend federal stimulus funds for service. This temporary measure will buy the MTA a year to begin tackling the real and lasting reforms Chairman Jay Walder has already laid out in his recent report, "Making Every Dollar Count." With our plan, the agency can act in the interest of the riding public, untie them from the tracks, and save them from these devastating cuts.

*Quinn is City Council speaker, Vacca is a city councilman and Transportation Committee chair and Russianoff is senior attorney for the NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign*



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

**DAILY NEWS**

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

## MTA is hit for rolling with bad contractors

**BY PETE DONOHUE**

DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

COMPANIES THAT do shoddy work for the MTA can still find work at the agency, a new report says.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority inspector general found that evaluators responsible for weeding out lousy contractors rarely doled out low marks, even to firms that deserved them.

In one instance, a boiler company was hired as a subcontractor on a Long Island Rail Road construction project just months after being fired from a NYC Transit project for poor performance, yesterday's report by Barry Kluger's office said.

Between 2006 and 2008, fewer than 5% of the 2,579 contractors received a marginal grade, and less than 1% received the lowest mark, unsatisfactory.

The report found managers wrongly interpreted evaluation guidelines and were overly concerned about shrinking the pool of companies available to bid on future work.

And in some cases, they dragged their

feet on the grading, as in the cases of the DMJM & Harris consulting firm.

It took Long Island Rail Road managers nine months to give them an unsatisfactory grade, but in that time the firm received five more contracts totaling almost \$25 million from NYC Transit and other MTA divisions that didn't know about their poor performance.

The report doesn't attempt to quantify how much money might have been wasted because of the inadequate screening of contractors.

Still, Kluger said, "Common sense would dictate money is lost if you don't properly supervise problematic contractors and take these issues into consideration in the selection of contractors."

MTA Chairman Jay Walder accepted the report's findings and recommendations.

"My top priority is changing how the MTA does business so we can say that every fare and taxpayer dollar is being used as effectively as possible," Walder said in a statement. "Too often we have let our contractors slide when they fail to perform."

*pdonohue@nydailynews.com*

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### The New York Times

February 3, 2010

## M.T.A. Fails to Honestly Rate Contractors' Work, Report Says

By **MICHAEL M. GRYNBAUM**

Outside contractors working on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's biggest projects are routinely given positive evaluations despite mediocre work, in part to preserve business relationships, an investigation by the authority's inspector general has found.

A system to evaluate contractors' performance, in place for 12 years, was intended to help the authority keep inadequate contractors from landing future jobs, many of which are worth upward of a million dollars in public funds.

But fewer than 5 percent of the 2,579 contractors evaluated between 2006 and 2008 received a grade of marginal, and fewer than 1 percent were graded unsatisfactory, the lowest mark, according to the report, which was released Tuesday. In several instances, evaluators reported feeling pressured by upper management to raise their ratings, apparently to avoid hampering the authority's ability to deal with vendors in the future.

(Continued on reverse)

"Managers sometimes allowed what they perceived to be agency 'business decisions' to override their true assessments of contractor performance," the report found, noting that there is "an institutional reluctance, for a variety of reasons, to rate contractors' work as 'unsatisfactory,' even when such ratings are the most appropriate."

The authority is constantly under fire for rampant delays and ballooning budgets on its major construction projects, including the Second Avenue subway, which are often handled nearly entirely by private contractors. Jay H. Walder, the authority's chairman, admitted last month that some vendors told him they build an "M.T.A. premium" into their bids, because of the perceived difficulty of working on projects with the authority.

"Too often we have let our contractors slide when they fail to perform, and that is why we have accepted the I.G.'s recommendations and are working to implement them," Mr. Walder said Tuesday in a prepared statement.

The report, issued by Barry L. Kluger, the authority's inspector general, found that the lack of accuracy in the evaluation process led to vendors' receiving contracts worth tens of millions of dollars despite poor past performance.

"Transparency is lost when evaluations are deficient or late, and when vendors are overrated," the report said. Mr. Kluger characterized the authority's aversion to assigning low ratings as "a pervasive mindset, amounting to an institutional culture."

In one instance, managers at the Long Island Rail Road waited more than nine months to grade one vendor, DMJM & Harris, as unsatisfactory, after the firm's work on a 2005 environmental consulting contract was deemed deficient. In the interim, that vendor received five more contracts worth nearly \$25 million from New York City Transit, Metro-North Railroad, and the authority's bridges and tunnels division; none of those other agencies were aware of any problems with the firm. (More than half of the evaluations at the Long Island Rail Road were filed late between 2006 and 2008.)

In 2006, Siemens, the technology company, contracted with New York City Transit to update subway signals so the signals could communicate with a central control center. An auditor found that the technology installed by the company consistently failed tests or inexplicably went off-line.

Under official guidelines, Siemens should have received an unsatisfactory rating. But a top official at New York City Transit instructed managers to instead assign a rating of "marginal," a higher mark, because of business considerations. The official did not want to jeopardize Siemens's ability to work with the agency in the future, the report said, and he apparently was unaware that an unsatisfactory rating does not strictly preclude contractors from bidding on other projects.

A similar rating upgrade occurred with a second Siemens contract in 2007, the report said.

In response to the report's findings, the authority agreed to institute spot checks of the evaluations to ensure accuracy; prohibit the upgrading of unsatisfactory ratings in cases where certain reporting technicalities have not been met; and speed up the submission of the evaluations, among other measures.

But citing legal concerns, the authority declined to introduce a similarly strict evaluation system for subcontractors, who perform about three-quarters of its capital workload. Such a system is already in place at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

"Despite the troubling aspects of what we found, we are encouraged that the MTA accepted all of the major findings in our reports, and has expressed its eagerness to work with us regarding our recommendations," Mr. Kluger said. "A number of these meetings have already taken place."

6000-288-443  
Gorman  
Mr. Kluger

# What's wrong with this picture?



**While 550,000 New York schoolchildren are told to take a hike, MTA's executives travel in chauffeured limousines.**

The MTA's spending priorities are out of whack. If you're an MTA executive, where do you make cuts in a multi-billion-dollar budget? Where do you start?

Do you stop hiring limousines to carry you to MTA's Madison Avenue headquarters? No, of course not.

Do you slash spending on the Fulton Street Transit Center — a project already \$600 million dollars over budget? No, wouldn't think of it.

What about the SONET project, which involves laying fiber optic cable and is \$215 million over budget — perhaps belt-tightening there? No way.

What about cutting costs in the Communications-Based Train Control project, 51 percent over budget, more than \$110 million dollars, and years behind schedule? Can you squeeze out some money there? No can do.

How about tapping the \$90 million in federal stimulus dollars that can be directed toward averting service cuts? Forget about it.

What to do? Remember you're an MTA executive. The obvious answer: First, throw 550,000 New York schoolchildren off buses and trains and hit them with fares for the first time in eight decades.

Second, blame someone else, anyone else, working families, the elderly, the disabled and especially frontline transit workers for your budget problems.

It's time for MTA to provide the traveling public, school children and its own workers with fair treatment and not "the fare treatment."

MTA management's limousine logic is flawed. There are better ways to address the transit authority's budget shortfall.

**FAIR TREATMENT —  
NOT THE FARE TREATMENT**



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# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

THE CHIEF-LEADER, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2010

*Walder: Unsound Practice*

## TWU, Riders Group: Use 'Stimulus' to Avert Layoffs

By ARI PAUL

To use or not to use capital funding for operational expenses, that is the question for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

The agency's CEO and Chairman, Jay Walder, points to the fiscal crisis of the 1970s as reason not to, defending a revised set of service cuts that would involve the laying off of 700 New York City Transit workers, mostly Bus Operators and Station Agents.

But Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen, joined by City Council Transportation Committee Chair James Vacca and Straphangers Campaign leader Gene Russianoff, says that times are different, and Federal stimulus dollars should be funneled to averting the reductions.

### 'Cure Immediate Problems'

"Jay Walder's whole theme to reshape the MTA is 'make every dollar count.' We agree," Mr. Samuelsen said Jan. 27 outside the agency's midtown headquarters before its monthly board meeting. "The refusal of the MTA to use the \$90 million in available stimulus money to buffer the operating budget is also illogical. They're immediate problems right now that can be cured by infusing Federal capital money into the operating budget, and they're refusing to do it."

The Local 100 leader claimed that the MTA was already taking money from its operational budget to cover "unnecessary" capital projects, such as putting digital clocks in subway stations that inform passengers when the next train will arrive, which Mr. Samuelsen claimed was up to \$200 million over budget.

"They're saying that if they don't make investments into the capital projects that the tracks will revert and the subway system will revert back to the 1970s," he said. "That's simply not the case. The railroad tracks and the subway in general are not nearly in the bad shape they were in the 1970s. There's not a danger of derailments. The tracks are in good shape. The capital money that they're talking about spending is spending on

non-essential technology projects."

### It's Not Beame Revisited

Mr. Russianoff, standing with Mr. Samuelsen, rebuffed the MTA's defense that such a move was a mistake then-Mayor Abe Beame made in the 1970s in what was known as the "Beame shuffle," using capital funds to buy subway cars. The commuter advocate pointed out that a portion of stimulus money for mass transit is available solely for operational use.

"Here, it's national policy to use Federal stimulus money, up to 10 percent, for transit operations," Mr. Russianoff said. "Places like Seattle, St. Louis, Atlanta have flexed their stimulus money. And their other pot of money, they have \$50 million in the operating budget, which they're using for capital. It's not capital to operating. It's operating to capital. They're taking money that is desperately needed to keep the trains and buses running, and

they're using it for their pet projects. Maybe when they're more flush, such a thing could be entertained, but that money is making the deficit bigger."

Mr. Walder defended his stance, saying that "we spent years digging ourselves out of the hole" due to the city's financial decisions of the 1970s.

### 'Can't Go Down That Path'

"For all the people who look at this and say, 'it's just a little bit,' recognize that there's no doubt in my mind that that's exactly what people said in the 1970s when they started down that path," he said. "I think the other point that I will continue to underscore is that we should not let the economic downturn be an excuse for not improving our services. We have things we can do for our customers. They matter. We should find ways to be able to do them."

During the board meeting, Mr.

(Continued on reverse)



The Chief-Leader/Michel Friang

**MONEY'S THERE, JUST NOT IN THE RIGHT PLACE:** Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen claimed the Metropolitan Transportation Authority was sinking millions of dollars into unnecessary technology projects that could be used to avert subway and bus cuts and the laying off of 700 workers.

(Continued from reverse)

Walder recognized several new low-cost improvements such as the redevelopment of the agency's Web site, which offers more information and statistics about train and bus routes.

"We must continue the path of moving forward on improving customer service," he said.

During the public speaking section of last week's meeting, several commuters voiced their frustration with protecting capital funding for expensive projects such as the Second Ave. subway by cutting train and bus service and eliminated free transit passes to students; some have argued that east-side transit options could be enhanced more cheaply with alternatives like bus rapid transit rather than a new subway line.

U.S. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand sent a letter to U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid asking the Senate to allocate \$15 billion in mass transit aid, of which 10 percent could be used for operational costs.

Critics skeptical of using capital funds for operations point out that Federal stimulus funds are only a quick fix for the agency.

### 'Sugar High' Won't Last

"In the end, though, we can't put too much faith into Federal funding," said Benjamin Kabak on his transit blog, Second Ave. Sagas. "These dollars are the equivalent of a sugar high: It might feel good to avoid the cuts now, but it doesn't do anything to address the institutional problems inherent in the way the city and state do not provide adequate funding mechanisms for the MTA."

Indeed, Mr. Walder reiterated that Albany has not set up an adequate, long-term funding stream for the authority, and the Governor's recent budget proposals showed no sign that this would be established soon. Last year, when similar Draconian budget cuts for the MTA were proposed, the State Senate passed a bail-out package that fell short of imposing tolls on the East River bridges and tunnels as proposed by Richard Ravitch, who later became Lieutenant Governor. Transit advocates said the tolls would have provided the necessary, long-term funding.

But Mr. Vacca last week dismissed the idea of the labor-commuter coalition lobbying the State Legislature to try again with the tolls.

"We think that this plan that we've put forth is logical and will avert the cuts," he said.

Mr. Samuelsen said that joint management-labor lobbying for more Federal transit funds could provide shared ground for Local 100 and the MTA, which have been embroiled in a legal dispute over a contract arbitration award handed down last year. Mr. Samuelsen sent a letter to Mr. Walder before last week's meeting inviting him on a trip to Washington so that union reps, commuter advocates, and the agency head could talk to Members of Congress as a united front.

"I'll even pay for his round-trip ticket to come down there with us," he said.

904 - NYDailyNews.com RACING FINAL Partly cloudy, 37/26, Tuesday, February 2, 2010  
**DAILY NEWS**

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

# Use stimulus cash to halt MTA cuts, board bigs urge

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILYNEWS STAFF WRITER

A GROWING number of major transit agencies are using federal stimulus money to avoid service cuts — and some MTA board members think it's the right move for New York, too.

At least six of the 10 biggest bus and rail systems in the country have decided to spend up to 10% of their stimulus funds to plug budget holes, the Daily News has learned.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority is the latest to choose the option. Transit officials in the nation's capital voted last week to use \$10 million of its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act money, along with revenues from a 10-cent fare hike, to cancel service cuts as they were about to be implemented.

"We bought some time," Washington Metropolitan spokesman Steven Taubenkibel said yesterday.

Doreen Frasca, chairwoman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's NYC Transit committee, said the MTA should use some federal funds "to avoid the most egregious of the service cuts" to the bus and subway system.

MTA board member Allen Cappelli also said the authority should give the idea serious consideration.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder has resisted the idea. He has said the stimulus funds are needed for an even more strained budget that is critical to reliability and safety: the capital construction budget, which pays for such things as track replacement, new buses and trains, and technological upgrades to signals and communications systems.

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# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Friday, February 5, 2010

**NEW YORK POST**

## DAILY NEWS

Friday, February 5, 2010

# Senate Dems press \$80B econ package

BY PETE DONOHUE  
and MICHAEL McAULIFF in Washington  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

THE SENATE shifted into jobs gear yesterday, priming the pump for a new \$80 billion economic injection Democrats hope to pass next week.

With the Dow plummeting 268 points on word that unemployment unexpectedly rose last week, Senate leaders unveiled the rough outlines of their package of tax breaks and new spending to spur a recovering but still-sluggish economy.

The Senate's unusual speed stems in part from the loss Democrats suffered in Massachusetts' Senate contest last month.

"We heard the message of Massachusetts," said New York Sen. Chuck Schumer. "They said focus immediately, and don't take your focus off jobs, the economy, helping the middle class."

Nevertheless, Schumer and other Democratic leaders are striving mightily to make this plan bipartisan.

Schumer worked with Utah GOP Sen. Orrin Hatch to craft a \$10 billion piece of the measure—a Social Security tax holiday lasting through 2010 for employers who make new hires. There would also be a \$1,000 tax credit next year for jobs that last at least 52 weeks.

"It's simple, it's implemented immediately, and it goes directly to reduce unemployment," said Schumer, who's optimistic it will pass quickly. "I hope it sets a new trend for bipartisan accomplishment."

Also in the bill are expected to be extensions of unemployment insurance and the COBRA tax credits that help laidoff workers keep their health insurance.

There are also highway funds, low-cost bonds for state construction projects and an extension of about \$33 billion in expiring tax breaks.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid hopes to pass the bill before Congress takes the Presidents' Day week off.

Then leaders want to move on to some tougher measures to pass, including more spending on major transit and other infrastructure projects.

That is the part New Yorkers were crying for yesterday to help plug Metropolitan Transportation Authority budget gaps.

The MTA plans to slash bus and subway service, and lay off workers, because of declining state tax revenues.

"Now more than ever, additional federal support is needed to save jobs and save service," Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen said.

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# Mike adds to fare 'beware'

## Grim 2011 forecast for MTA

By SALLY GOLDENBERG  
and TOM NAMAKO

Mayor Bloomberg warns that another MTA fare hike could be rolling into the station—and soon.

Albany has "to come up with some ways to fund the MTA, or the MTA is either going to have to raise rates dramatically or cut back service dramatically—or, what's more likely, some combination of the two," Bloomberg said yesterday.

The Post first reported yesterday that MTA board members are considering a fare increase higher than the already-scheduled 7.5 percent hike in 2011, as a way to close a \$400 million hole.

That's because the Paterson administration failed three times to accurately calculate how much a new tax on business payrolls would bring to the cash-strapped MTA.

"As much as it pains me to have to do another fare hike, there are precious few options at this point," a board member, who requested anonymity, said yesterday.

"Looking at the reality of where we are financially, I don't know how we go about continuing to provide service without the fare hike."

The MTA had already proposed service cuts, eliminating free student fares and reducing service for disabled riders to close a previous shortfall—and that was before the new, \$400 million problem.

MTA chief Jay Walder said he's waiting to see the

final state budget forecast, due Tuesday, before he addresses how to close his massive budget gap.

Gov. Paterson said recently that predictions about how much revenue a new tax will bring in are often wrong.

An increasing number of board members and advocates also say the MTA should use capital funds—money reserved for big projects—in the day-to-day budget.

At least \$140 million in federal stimulus money

and "pay as you go" operating dollars could also be used.

"We still think it's a bad idea to use capital dollars," said MTA spokesman Jeremy Soffin. "That said, we are required to have a balanced budget and everything needs to be on the table."

Transport Workers Union President John Samuelsen said the agency is "out of whack and out of touch" with everyday New Yorkers if it doesn't use the capital funds.

His comments came at a rally to save the M train at the subway line's Broad Street station. The MTA plans to replace the route with an extension of the V line as a cost-savings measure.

"We have a mass-transit system on the verge of not serving the masses," said City Councilman Jimmy Vacca, chairman of the council's Transportation Committee, at the rally. "Riders are facing an abyss."

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TRANSIT

Updated 02/04/2010 10:27 PM

# Local Leaders: MTA Can Take Action To Prevent Service Cuts

By: NY1 News

Elected officials, labor leaders and transit advocates said Thursday that there are ways to prevent the massive service cuts the Metropolitan Transportation Authority has planned, a day after the agency unveiled that its financial situation is even worse than before.

The group gathered with straphangers in Lower Manhattan to call for people to vent their frustration and demand action. They met at the Broad Street station where the M train stops, but possibly not for much longer.

The M line is one of two lines on the chopping block, along with several bus routes and free student MetroCards.

But community leaders say the agency can lessen the severity of cuts by redirecting stimulus funds to operating costs.

"Boarding up and shutting down the M line doesn't make sense," said Transit Workers Union President John Samuelsen. "Making our children pay bus and subway fares to go to school doesn't make sense. Subjecting four-million New Yorkers to significantly longer waits at bus and subway stops doesn't make sense."

"When the stimulus federal money was distributed, the federal government realized that New York and other jurisdictions would unfortunately most likely have operating shortfalls. That's why the law explicitly allows this, in a transparent way, to happen," said City Council Speaker Christine Quinn.

Despite the calls to move the money to the operating budget, MTA Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jay Walder has said money in the capital budget would remain there.

The agency announced Wednesday it is facing a \$400 million budget gap this year, as the payroll tax that was supposed to help pay transit bills came up short.

That tax was implemented as part of the state Legislature's MTA bailout last year.

An MTA spokesman Thursday said using capital funds for operating expenses would be a damaging and bad policy decision, citing the the transit system's deterioration back in the 1970s.

"We support the 2nd Ave line, and east side access. But back

in the 70s when the city had a big fiscal crisis, they put such projects on hold," said Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign.

Meanwhile, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said all this could have been avoided if the state had adopted his congestion pricing plan to put tolls on East River bridges and charge drivers for coming into Manhattan during peak periods, with the money raised going to mass transit.

"We could have improved the safety and the quality and the frequency and reliability of mass transit in the city while at the same time unclogging our streets. That didn't fly," said the mayor. "Maybe the state will take it up and adopt it as their own and that's fine with me. But they have to come up with some ways to fund the MTA or the MTA will have to raise rates dramatically or cut service dramatically or more likely some combination of the two."

Riders NY1 spoke with Thursday say they have had enough.

"It's the same old story over and over again," said one straphanger. "They bring out the same threats and then they do some of them, they don't do some of them. You can't take them seriously, but at the same time, we're worried about the cuts."

"We thought we were going to get better service and we're not," said another rider. "I don't know what to say anymore. It's just disgusting."

The agency has said it does not plan to raise fares this year, but is planning to raise fares by 7.5 percent next year.

Meanwhile, the state's economic projections are growing even bleaker.

Governor David Paterson says the projected deficit for the next fiscal year has jumped from \$7.4 billion to more than \$8 billion since he unveiled his budget last month.

He blames the widening gap on the recession, which has caused tax revenues to dip and demand for Medicaid to rise.

Paterson will unveil a proposal to make up the new gap next week.

In a separate report, State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli says the governor's budget relies on unrealistic revenue projections and savings assumptions.



# MTA money woes keeps hitting the people

By MARYAM ABDUL-ALEEM

*Special to the AmNews*

Rather than implement the massive service cuts that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is proposing to fix its almost \$400 million budget deficit the MTA announced last week, legislators, the Straphangers Campaign, the Transit Workers Union and others called on the MTA to use federal funding to fix its budget woes rather than burden commuters with more service reductions.

They also called on the MTA to redirect the use of operating funds it wants to use on capital projects and instead use that \$50 million on bus and train service.

Transport Workers Union President John Samuelson said New Yorkers are already facing too many hurdles in today's economy to have to deal with more cuts. He asked MTA Chairman Jay Walder to avert

the cuts by using \$90 million to \$121 million in federal stimulus money to plug the new hole that the MTA said it now faces after a new state tax on employees failed to provide a needed revenue boost.

At a press conference last Thursday at the Broad Street Subway station, where the M train stops, the MTA wants to eliminate, advocates in favor of using federal stimulus funds to fill the MTA budget gap expressed the hardship that commuters would face with crowded trains, longer bus lines, and empty wallets if the proposed M subway line was eliminated, students MetroCards were phased out and bus lines rerouted and canceled.

"MTA spending priorities are completely out of whack and out of touch with the needs of New Yorkers," Samuelson said about the proposals that have commuters and students nervous.

James Vacca, chair of the

## Tuskegee

(Continued from Page 5)

their vote. "Like Obama," said Brown, "he had to hold on to them by maintaining segregation." Having won the presidency in 1932 and 1936, Roosevelt was gearing up for a run at a third term.

Enter a man erased from

transportation committee of the City Council, said "straphangers face a challenge like they have never faced before. Straphangers face an abyss. Straphangers face absolute alienation because we have a mass transit system on the verge of no longer serving the masses. We have a mass transit system on the verge of having service cuts that will cripple the entire system."

And State Sen. Bill Perkins, who chairs the committee on corporation, authorities and commissions, said legislators had a "solution to these draconian cuts," while expressing his anger with the MTA's proposals. "To terrorize our children like this by suggesting that they will no longer be able to have free transportation is something that is unacceptable."

And, Perkins said, "to terrorize our seniors, to suggest that they will have to be crippled in terms of their transportation is totally unacceptable."

"Mrs. Roosevelt visited Tuskegee and was a member of the Rosenwald Foundation, which was founded by Julius Rosenwald," said Brown. "[The foundation] was interested in providing money to improve Black colleges." Kennedy Field would eventually become the Tuskegee Army Air Field.

The NAACP initially contin-

"It is fully within the legal structure of the stimulus package and fully within the power of the MTA board for them to take a portion of the stimulus money the MTA has received [and] use those funds to fund the operating expenses of the MTA," City Council Speaker Christine Quinn said.

She explained that the money was distributed by the federal government to assist jurisdictions, like New York, that might have operating short falls, which the legislators and advocates agreed was an "idea that will keep MetroCards in students' pockets, lessen cutbacks in subways and buses, [and] keep seniors and disabled people with Access-A-Ride services."

Quinn added that there was no reason for the MTA not to put these solutions in place while working on longer-term restructuring efforts to stabilize the MTA.

Other transit systems in

cities such as Atlanta, Seattle, St. Louis and Chicago are using federal stimulus money in the same proposal that legislators are calling on the MTA to use.

Public Advocate Bill de Blasio said, "There seems to be a lack of understanding that people's lives are involved around the transportation system."

While DC 37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts said she wanted an investigation into where MTA resources were going because, she said, she was "sick and tired of hearing that we don't have money, and the situation gets worse and worse every day."

Public hearings on the proposals will be held in March and City Council members are asking the public to sign an online petition in support of their proposal at [council.nyc.gov/html/action\\_center/mta.shtml](http://council.nyc.gov/html/action_center/mta.shtml) or call the MTA at (212) 878-7483.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder was not available for comment.

es," said Brown. "I'm not saying that racism isn't here, but a problem is an opportunity."

The challenges and obstacles that Brown faced, along with the likes of the late Percy Sutton and Lee Archer, are well chronicled at this point, but sometimes the stage, platform and context in which you conduct your actions are just as important if not more

So how did these men perse-



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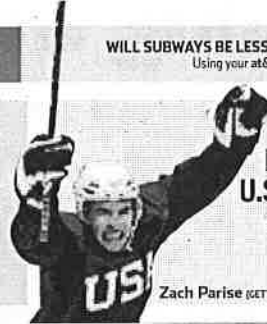
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2010



WILL SUBWAYS BE LESS SAFE WITH FEWER STATION AGENTS? A YES B NO  
Using your at&t phone, text your vote, A or B, to amNY (2669)



SeaWorld horror:  
Whale kills trainer  
during show  
Page 4



Devil leads  
U.S. to Olympic  
semifinals  
Page 22

Zach Parise (62111)

5 new casual  
spots to whet  
your appetite  
Page 14



# You're on your own

The MTA will ax 450 station agents  
by May, fueling fears crime will rise

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# Who's minding the station?

**Agent layoffs raise fears of spike in crime**

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

The eyes and ears of the subway system are vanishing — and earlier than many thought.

By May, 450 station agents, who help riders and keep watch in the system, will lose their jobs because of a \$750 million budget gap, agency officials said yesterday.

"The safety of the system will absolutely deteriorate," said John Samuelsen, president of the Transport Workers Union Local 100. "Of course we're going to fight back."

The agents have been dwindling since last year through attrition, with the shrinking numbers fueling turnstile jumping at remote parts of the system, transit advocates said. More crooks are also illegally swiping in straphangers for cash, said Paul Piazza, a union representative for stations. "The MTA is promoting the illegal economy by doing this," Piazza said.

After the layoffs, there will be 2,650 station agents, down from roughly 3,250 last year. "It's very dangerous. They should have more help," said Cassandra Williams, 22, a Crown Heights rider who has seen crooks flee her station before police were able to respond.

NYC Transit spokesman Paul Fleuranges said there



Straphangers are worried that the loss of 450 station agents will leave stations more vulnerable to crime. (J. MICKELSON/AMNY)

has been no increase in fare evasion since the station agents were reduced.

Arrests for turnstile jumping were up 17 percent last month compared with January 2009, according to transit figures. The transit bureau's 2,550 officers have been patrolling unmanned entrances, but authorities

must prioritize serious crime over fare evasion,

**Agent cuts**  
450  
Agents being laid off

**100**  
Station booths set for closure

**\$13.2M**  
Savings in 2010

chief James Hall said in December.

"[The station agents] need work and we, the customers, need security," said Carlos Razzo, 39, of Hell's Kitchen.

All 468 stations will continue to have one attendant at all hours, and the empty entrances have intercoms connecting to the staffed booth, Fleuranges said. Transit is evaluating whether to install cameras

## MTA hauls away out-of-use token booths

Some token booths are going the way of the token. NYC Transit recently started tearing out station booths in subway entrances that are losing their station agents, with several already gone, transit spokesman Paul Fleuranges said. Earlier this month, a booth in the Utica Avenue station on

the A line was abruptly removed, leaving a stained floor and little else. "We do not want [the booths] to fall prey to vandalism," Fleuranges said. The booths, which have been fixtures of the system for decades, are being sold as scrap, transit said. (HEATHER HADDON)

at the entrances, but will not add high turnstiles to deter fare evasion, he said. "Crime in the subways is at the lowest rate in years,"

MTA CEO Jay Walder said yesterday. "We are providing a safe and secure system and will continue to do so." Rhea Mahabuni contributed to this story.

Briefs

### Macy's flagship store struck yet again by fire

Macy's flagship Herald Square store was partially evacuated yesterday after a fire was called in just before noon, FDNY officials said. The fire was brought under control in less than three hours. Authorities yesterday had not determined the cause of the fire. In December, hundreds of holiday shoppers were forced to evacuate the store when a fire started in an escalator.

### Mike: Gov't should butt out of Wall Street pay

Mayor Michael Bloomberg yesterday stepped into the fray over Wall Street pay, calling government involvement in the compensation of executives a Soviet-style concept that should not be practiced here. The White House has been reviewing pay at financial firms that have gotten government money.



Bloomberg

### Third arrest is made in fake jewelry heist

Police have arrested a third man in a fake jewelry heist at Dialite Imports in Manhattan, where it turns out that the owners allegedly orchestrated the robbery. Edward Fried pleaded not guilty yesterday to charges of grand larceny for allegedly acting as one of the robbers. The owners were arrested on Tuesday and charged with grand larceny.

### DA: Keep murder charge in self-help guru slay

Prosecutors said yesterday that they won't give up on a murder case against Kenneth Minor, who is accused of stabbing motivational speaker Jeffrey Locker to death in Manhattan. While there's evidence that Locker sought help killing himself, the evidence isn't conclusive, prosecutors argued in court papers filed yesterday.

### Company guilty of faking landmark concrete tests

Testwell Laboratories, a once-prominent concrete testing company and two of its top officials were convicted yesterday on racketeering charges for systematically faking results for landmarks such as the new Yankee Stadium and One World Trade Center. The men face at least a year in prison. (AP)

# Jeter only has eyes for Yanks as contract winds down



(AP) Derek Jeter tells the press yesterday it's the last time he will discuss his contract all year.

Derek Jeter reiterated what every Yankees fan wanted to hear: He hopes to play in pinstripes forever.

He just doesn't want to spend time talking about his future in New York.

"I've said from day one, this is the only organization I've ever wanted to play for, and that's still true today," Jeter said yesterday. "I've never envisioned myself playing anywhere else, and hopefully I don't have to."

The 35-year-old Jeter is entering the final season of a \$189 million, 10-year deal.

The All-Star shortstop said he doesn't have a set number of years in mind that he'd like to continue playing and steered around a question about whether he has a desire to be the Yankees' highest-paid player.

He said this will be the final time he speaks about his contract status.

"To be honest with you, I never

put limitations on how long I can play. ... I want to play as long as I can, as long as I'm having fun, as long as I can be productive," Jeter said.

Closer Mariano Rivera also is headed into the last season of his contract. The Yankees have a policy of not negotiating new contracts until a player's previous deal expires, but it sounds as though the club wants to do everything it can to hang on to both players. (AP)

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

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Department of Communications



## Blast Low Modification Rate

# TWU Joins Rally Prodding Chase to Ease Mortgages

By FLORA FAIR

Transport Workers Union Local 100 was among the labor groups that joined embattled homeowners and activists at a Feb. 9 protest in front of JP Morgan Chase headquarters on Park Ave. to demand the bank help mortgage-troubled residents hold on to their homes.

Despite frigid temperatures, a sizable crowd was in attendance, chanting "Modify loans, save homes" as Chase security guards flanking the entrance looked on.

Speaking on behalf of homeowners, Queens resident Ann Broglin told of her own troubles with Chase. "They are making record profits by ignoring homeowners like myself," she said. "If you can't give us modifications, we will take our money out of your bank."

### Seek Loan Modifications

Representatives with New York City Communities for Change said the bank's unwillingness to grant loan modifications is the heart of the problem, and the reason they organized the protest. Such modifications could prevent foreclosure and give local homeowners a more-affordable mortgage payment. Until that happens, NYCC is requesting that Chase halt any new foreclosures, stop moving forward with existing ones, and write down loan values for homeowners who are "underwater"—meaning the balance of their loan is worth more than the actual value of their home.

Chase spokesman Tom Kelly said in a statement that the company is doing "everything possible" to help homeowners: "We have opened five centers in the New York metro area—in Flushing, Brooklyn and The Bronx, as well as Jersey City and Paramus, N.J.—to provide face-to-face counseling to homeowners, and have met with more than 9,000 borrowers through

the end of 2010," Mr. Kelly said. Chase is also holding a five-day homeowner outreach event next month in Brooklyn, although he wasn't sure whether this had been directly communicated to protest organizers.

Local 100 Recording Secretary Benita Johnson quoted Thomas Jefferson's assertion that banking institutions can be more dangerous than armies and said, "It is clear that JP Morgan Chase has modified only 6 percent of its troubled NYC mortgagées who pleaded for assistance... That means there's thousands more of us that are in dire straits."

She called it a "slap in the face" that Chase would receive bail-out funds from the government, but residents "cannot receive appropriate consideration during a time of fiscal hardships that they didn't even create."

### NYCERS Has \$270M With Bank

Local 100 and other unions have an interest beyond civic duty, since the New York City Employee Retirement System (NYCERS) covers transit worker pensions and has about \$270 million invested in Chase stocks and bonds. But this could also give them leverage to fight what they see as unfair lending practices.

"For us, this journey's single step begins when we unions make requests," Ms. Johnson said. "NYCERS will be convening a Board of Trustees meeting today, and TWU Local 100 will be asking its representative to present our concerns to the board." TWU officials say that if Chase doesn't find a solution for more New York City homeowners, they will ask the pension board to sell off their Chase investments.

"Chase's actions don't just harm the individuals whose houses get foreclosed," said Local 100 President John Samuelsen in a statement. "Entire communities are affected."



The Chief-Leader/Pat Arnov

**'UNIONS ARE THE COMMUNITY':** Local 100 Recording Secretary Benita Johnson said that if unions continued to support institutions like Chase while members suffered at the bank's hands it would make them 'hypocrites.'



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

amNY.com

MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2010



# Bus riders are dreading 'doomsday'

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

The MTA may have scaled back some of the "doomsday" service cuts, but many bus riders won't be spared, with more than 100 routes slated to be nixed or changed.

"It's very frustrating," said Stephanie Paddock, 27, a rider of the B69 along Prospect Park. The MTA plans to restructure the Brooklyn route this summer, forcing 1,200 straphangers to walk two long blocks to another bus, the B67.

To help fill a \$750 million budget gap, the MTA is proposing \$60 million in bus cuts, impacting 200,000 riders. The public will get to weigh in on the cuts at hearings, which start today, and will be held in New York City beginning tomorrow.

The cuts are especially bad in Manhattan and Brooklyn, where more than half of all local bus routes



The B71 bus in Brooklyn is among the lines that may be eliminated as the MTA considers budget cuts. The public will have a chance this week to voice concerns. (KATE WARBURTON)

are being axed, restructured or shortened. Some straphangers will have to walk or transfer, adding up to 20 minutes to their commutes,

MTA documents show. "One of the most deadly words in transit is 'transfer,'" said Gene Russianoff, of the Straphangers Campaign.

The cuts will also make for more crowding on the remaining bus routes and neighboring subways, advocates said.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

New Yorkers will get to speak out about the cuts this week at hearings in each borough that start at 6 p.m.

- Tomorrow  
College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd.  
Sheraton LaGuardia East Hotel, 135-20 39th Ave., Flushing
- Wednesday  
The Paradise Theater, 2403 Grand Concourse, the Bronx  
Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway
- Thursday  
Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Avenue at 27th Street
- For more info, go to [MTA.info](http://MTA.info).

MTA CEO Jay Walder said the cuts are less catastrophic than ones considered last year, but agreed that the reductions are painful and will result in more layoffs.

Julia Borovskaya and Nick Klopsis contributed to this story.



Students may be lining up to buy fare cards.

Photo: METRO

# City gets heat on student ride fares

In the heat of his re-election push, Mayor Michael Bloomberg last August called for mass transit improvements, but many critics say he's been far too quiet since on the most pressing transit issue: protecting free MetroCards for the city's schoolkids.

"Whether it's Bloomberg or the Council, the state and the city have all fallen short of their responsibility to provide," said Bill Henderson, executive director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA.

The mayor has attacked the cash-strapped MTA's proposal to take away students' free cards, but critics say he's offered few if any suggestions for saving a program that the city has long underfunded.

The city and state each pay \$45 million a year toward student cards and the MTA picks up the difference. But this year, the state put in just \$6 million. The city is paying its share despite facing a \$4.9 billion deficit in 2011, a City Hall spokesman said.

But the city's \$45 million share hasn't changed in 15 years and hasn't kept pace with rising costs, said Tom Prendergast, head of NYC Transit. Students' cards are now estimated to cost \$214 million a year.

"The real place for those student MetroCard protests should be at City Hall," said Andrew Albert, of the Transit Riders Council.

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn said the Council would consider paying more if the state agreed to do the same.

## TIMELINE

**October 1994.** Mayor Giuliani said the city would no longer cover entire cost of student MetroCards. An agreement split the then-\$135 million tab between the city, state and MTA.

**December 2009.** Gov. David Paterson said the state can only pay \$6 million for 2009/2010 budget. He later he proposed paying \$25 million.

**Today.** MTA says it can't afford to subsidize free student MetroCards and needs the \$214 million it could collect if students pay to ride.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREAT NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

*Department of Communications*



**MTA STATION AGENTS**

# 'THEY SAVED MY LIFE'

**Rider hacked by power saw-wielding  
madman in '06 battles MTA layoffs**

Page 3

Michael Steinberg (TIFFANY L. CLARK)



# His plea: Don't fire lifesavers

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Michael Steinberg doesn't need to be told that station agents are vital to subway security. The proof is written in scars crisscrossing his chest.

On July 8, 2006, Steinberg's life was shattered as he headed to the No. 1 train at 110th Street to make his early shift at the post office. A strip-club bouncer with a history of drug arrests cornered Steinberg, hacking him in the chest with two power saws that transit crews left at the station.

Crazed, but silent, Tareyton Williams nearly ripped through Steinberg's lungs with the saw in a drug-fueled rampage. As he lay there profusely bleeding, a quick-thinking station agent came to his rescue with a push of a button.

"I was losing a lot of blood. ... I was saying, 'God, this is it,'" recalled Steinberg in a recent phone interview with amNewYork.

The only other person in the station was token-booth worker Debra McIver. The Manhattan woman frantically called for help using the emergency button in her booth.

"They saved my life. They do more than just sell MetroCards and give directions," said the 67-year-old retired postal worker.

Police arrived just in time to rescue Steinberg and get him to St. Luke's Hospital. The pain of inserting a breathing tube was so bad that Steinberg had to clench a board between his teeth.

Steinberg is now fighting to keep the agents in the system as



Michael Steinberg, who in 2006 was hacked in the chest by a drug-crazed man with two power saws, was saved by a station agent. He will tell the MTA tonight that those workers should not be fired. (TIMOTHY L. CLARE)

## LAST CHANCE TO SPEAK

The MTA is holding its last public hearing on service cuts today at 6 p.m. at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

Seventh Avenue at 27th Street. Hundreds of people are expected to rally outside FIT at 5 p.m.

the cash-strapped MTA plans to fire 450 of them by May to save \$21 million a year.

Williams, who later apologized,

was sentenced to 18 years in prison. Steinberg recovered through physical therapy but suffers some lung damage.

Steinberg still rides the subway, and plans to testify tonight about the need for station agents during an MTA public hearing on the cuts.

If the MTA implements the proposed changes, all stations will have one token clerk on duty at all times. Intercoms, which can be found in every station, will be used to contact the on-duty worker for help,

said an NYC Transit spokesman.

The MTA plans to close 100 token booths across the system, including at the station where Steinberg was attacked.

"Our presence there is a deterrent to crime," said Maurice Jenkins, the union head for station workers, who estimated that agents call for help 50 times a day.

A transit spokesman said that crime in the subways is at historic lows and transit cops will "ensure that trend continues."



A change on the Q will affect the new line. (CHARLES ROHM)

## Disruptions already for 2nd Ave. line?

It hasn't even started running yet, but the Second Avenue Subway could get hit by a service cut.

As part of the proposed service reductions, the MTA is looking to replace the W train with the Q line in Queens by this summer, saving \$3.4 million. But that could strand riders of the new Second Avenue line, which is supposed to link up with the Q to allow riders to continue traveling south.

"Obviously you can't do both," said William Henderson, executive director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA.

The Q train couldn't easily service both Astoria and the Upper East Side because different tunnels go there.

What happens to the Q won't be determined until December 2010, when the first stretch of the Second Avenue line opens, said MTA spokesman Kevin Ortiz. (HEATHER HADDON)

# Rocky start for cab sharing

BY ROBERT LEVIN  
Special to amNewYork

Group cab rides began yesterday in Manhattan — and almost nobody came.

The program, which permits riders to share cabs during the morning rush at four Manhattan locations, got off to a slow start as about a half-dozen groups of people took advantage of the cheaper fare.

But Taxi & Limousine Commission Chairman Matthew W. Daus said a low turnout was expected on the first day because many are unfamiliar with



The group cab ride program allows for passengers to share taxis for flat fees of \$3 or \$4. (AMNY)

the program.

"We have and will continue to aggressively reach out to both potential pas-

sengers and taxicab drivers," Daus said yesterday. "Now that the stand is off the ground, word of mouth

will bolster our efforts and help the participation to grow."

The taxi stands for the yearlong program are located at 57th Street and Eighth Avenue; 72nd Street and Third Avenue; and 72nd Street and Columbus Avenue.

The plan allows passengers to queue up at the stands from 8 to 10 a.m. and share rides that heading south on Park Avenue from 72nd Street to 42nd Street, stopping on any corner, for flat fees of \$3 or \$4.

The final stop is at Grand Central Terminal.

# FAA rips dad who let kids 'direct' planes

It's not kids' play.

The Federal Aviation Administration yesterday suspended a Kennedy Airport air traffic controller and his supervisor for allowing two children to direct planes by radio, calling the episode a "lapse in judgment."

The controller brought his son to work on Feb. 16, letting him relay routine messages to pilots, and allowed a second child to do the same the next day, an FAA probe found.

It "not only violated FAA's own policies, but common-

sense standards for professional conduct," FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt said. "These kinds of distractions are totally unacceptable."

"JetBlue 171, cleared for takeoff," the young son, supervised by his father, is heard chirping on a radio transmission recording.

"Adios, amigos," he tells another flight.

In one of the recordings, the air traffic controller is heard telling the pilots: "This is what you get, guys, when the kids are out of school."

(AMNY/AP)



# Plan 1,000-Plus Layoffs At MTA, Light in Tunnel Is a Train Carrying Pain

By ARI PAUL

Transit advocates at the end of last year sensed further service cuts like anxious subway passengers on the platform peering down the tunnel: they might not have seen the train coming, but knew it was only a matter of time.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority board approved a doomsday budget last year that included the lay-off of 700 New York City Transit workers—mostly Station Agents and Bus Operators—and the agency's Chairman and CEO, Jay Walder, noted at the outset of 2010 that the state and MTA budgets actually looked grimmer than initially expected. The payroll mobility tax enacted last year to avert similar cuts, the agency said, has not realized enough revenue. The service cuts that the board approved would worsen, transit advocates surmised, and so would the job reductions.

## Attrition Not Enough

Last week, the MTA announced that it would lay off more than 1,000 workers, half of them Station Agents, as well as non-union managers and administrators, noting that the concept of meeting revised budget constraints with attrition-based job reductions was no longer economically feasible.

During the MTA board meeting Feb. 24, Mr. Walder said "the sum of the shortfall for the MTA is \$750 million, and it's happening in just a few short months," and that the growing finan-

cial problems justified his plan to "permanently reduce our cost structure."

What's more, he warned, more austerity measures are sure to be on the way.

"As painful as all this is—and there's nothing easy about anything that we've just said—we're far from out of the woods," he said. "So we're pursuing aggressively every idea that we've talked about. We're cutting our overtime, we're consolidating functions, we're re-working all of our supplier contracts, and we are looking at our material, at our inventory and finding better ways to be able to control that. Every one of those pieces will provide some savings. What we don't know is whether or not they're enough."

He added, "I sometimes feel like we're running up a down escalator."

## Won't Dip Into Stimulus

Mr. Walder has defended the cuts as necessary in fixing the budget, rejecting the so-called Russianoff Plan—named for Straphangers Campaign leader Gene Russianoff—that would have the agency use 10 percent of Federal stimulus funding for operational use rather than keep it all in the capital budget. He has said that any shifting of money from capital expenses to operations would inevitably erode the condition of the transit system.

Correction Officers Benevolent As-

(Continued on Page 12)



The Chief-Leader/Michel Friang

**IF YOU THINK IT'S BAD NOW. . . :** Jay Walder, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Chairman and CEO, didn't sugarcoat the financial situation of the agency, noting that the more-than 1,000 planned layoffs would help meet widening budget constraints, but that more cuts are sure to be needed down the line. 'I sometimes feel like we're running up a down escalator,' he said.

# MTA Pain Train Carrying 1,000 Layoffs

(Continued from Page 1)

sociation President Norman Seabrook, an MTA board member, proposed last week that the agency lobby lawmakers in New Jersey and Connecticut to impose a new two-cent gas tax to bring in new revenues.

"I think that would not only take the MTA out of the hole that it's in, but I think it would also provide additional money for the State of New Jersey, additional money for the State of Connecticut. It would provide additional money for the City of New York," he said.

Mr. Seabrook said such a tax would encourage more people to take public transportation and "it would give people the opportunity to save their jobs."

## Preferable to Job, Pass Cuts

The voting labor member of the board added that the job cuts and the elimination of free MetroCards for students would have profound social repercussions.

"A child that's not going to school because he or she doesn't have a bus pass or a train pass is going to walk from wherever it is, six blocks, eight blocks, 10 blocks, going to wait a few minutes, going to hop the subway, police officer's going to arrest him, he's not going to answer his summons, he's going to want to become a police officer, or correction officer or a firefighter five years from now, a warrant's going to pop up, he's not going to get the job, and it's just going to create such a nightmare in this state, it's going to be kind of difficult to repair," Mr. Seabrook said.

Transport Workers Union Local 100 officials are outraged by the Station Agent layoffs, and they endorse the Russianoff plan, saying that enough capital dollars could be shifted to avert layoffs and some of the service cuts without causing a significant problem for renovating and upgrading the system.

## 'Going to Take It on the Chin'

"This has been on the table since 2008 and we've been warning our members since 2008 about it," said Paul Piazza, a Station Agent and Local 100 executive board member, about the layoffs. "At one point we thought it was safe because of some deals made in Albany, but now they're declaring a financial emergency and we're going to take it on the chin, as usual."



**PUTTING IN HIS TWO CENTS:** Norman Seabrook, organized labor's voting member on the MTA board, urged the agency to lobby lawmakers in New Jersey and Connecticut to put a two-cent tax on gasoline that would subsidize the MTA and at the same time encourage commuters to use public transit rather than drive.

The MTA has argued that Station Agent jobs are being made redundant with the mechanized MetroCard systems, though Mr. Piazza countered that Station Agents provide help for passengers with directions and with operating the machines, and play a vital security role in the subways.

"They don't have enough [transit police officers]. Cameras can only record a crime, not prevent a crime," he said. "I wouldn't let my family go down there without a Station Agent in the booth."

Mr. Piazza said that this was especially necessary when the public is concerned about terrorism on the subway. Noting that terror suspect Najibullah Zazi pleaded guilty in Brooklyn Federal court Feb. 22 to charges of plotting a subway bombing, Mr. Piazza added, borrowing the MTA's oft-advertised phrase, "Who's going to see something and say something if this guy comes back?"

## PBA: 'A Deterrent to Crime'

The main NYPD union believes transit cops need the back-up from Station Agents to secure the subways. Patrolmen's Benevolent Association

President Patrick J. Lynch said in a statement, "There are 6,000 fewer police officers today than in 2001 and that shortage has seriously reduced staffing in precincts, transit districts and housing public service areas. Station Agents not only serve as the 'eyes and ears' of the police, but are a visible deterrent to crime by their mere presence. Laying off Station Agents without increasing police presence will most certainly make subway stations more dangerous."

Local 100 has long stated that the MTA needs to meet the yawning budget gap by trimming its managerial operations, and while the current staff cuts include a 15-percent reduction in the administrative payroll and what an agency statement called "deeper cuts at MTA headquarters," Mr. Piazza said it still needs to do more.

"That means they're going to cut the guy in the mailroom and the secretary," he said. "They're not going to cut the plethora of General Managers and very high-salaried employees that they have."

## Scold ACS Employee

## NEWS

## America turning on Tiger

Tiger's two cubs reportedly are moving back into his Florida den along with their betrayed mother, but not many people are as forgiving of the philandering golf great.

Woods, 34, is the most negatively viewed athlete since Kobe Bryant, who faced rape allegations in 2004, according to a Q Scores poll. Negative views of him are up 150 percent since last year, and his likability has declined 45 percent, the poll shows.

Despite the numbers — and about a dozen reported affairs — Elin Nordegren, 30, seems determined to work it out and will move from her rented house back into Tiger's mansion, RadarOnline.com reported Thursday. Woods was seen kissing Nordegren on the cheek three times and hugging her Wednesday in their backyard.

Woods and Nordegren (AP/WIDE WORLD)



## on track

WEEKEND SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

4 Utica Ave.-bound trains run express from Burnside Ave. to 125th St. until 5 a.m. Mon.

6 Morrison Ave.-Soundview and Whitlock Ave. stations closed until Mon., Sept. 13.

7 No trains between Times Square and Queensboro Plaza. The N, Q and S trains and free shuttle buses provide alternate service until 5 a.m. Mon.

A Far Rockaway-bound platforms at Beach 60th St. and Beach 36th St. are closed until June.

# Transit chief torn by cuts

'Emotional' Walder: I don't have answers

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

A visibly shaken Jay Walder said Thursday he's at a loss about how to fill the MTA giant's budget gap, comparing it to the crippling deficits of the 1970s.

"It's tearing my heart out right now," said the MTA chief, whose voice wavered repeatedly while speaking at a transit event Thursday. "If you ask me now if I know how to close that ... new gap, the frank answer is no."

The MTA has a massive budgetary hole of \$750 million, with dozens of proposed service cuts only shaving off \$77 million. Letting go more than 1,000 workers and slashing student MetroCards still wouldn't come close to filling the gap, and Walder doesn't expect an Albany bailout.

"Last night at 1 o'clock in the morning I'm turning over in bed trying to figure out how to make the choices," said Walder, who took over as the MTA chief in September.

A series of public hearings



Walder



TWU workers protest outside the transit hearing at FIT on Thursday.

(BY MICHAEL GOODMAN)

on the cuts ended Thursday, as hundreds of people protested the reductions at a rally in Manhattan.

Straphangers spoke against the cuts for six hours earlier in the week at a freezing theater in the Bronx, with Walder saying that only someone

'I'm turning over in bed trying to ... make the choices.'

MTA CEO Jay Walder on trying to balance the budget

who is "not human" could sit through the testimony without being moved.

"I'm exhausted right now,"

Walder said Thursday. "I'm feeling it. I'm emotional about it. But I don't know what the answer is."

Andrew Albert, chair of the NYC Transit Riders Council, wants Walder to beat the drum louder for state funding to stave off the cuts.

"He's in a very difficult position, but he needs to be a forceful advocate for funding for the transportation system," Albert said.

## Little-used bus lines spared MTA ax

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Some bus express routes are being spared from the "doomsday" cuts even though they are more expensive to run and have fewer passengers than lines being slashed.

Officials plan to ax only five of the 64 lines run by the MTA Bus Co. — which operates the private bus lines serving the boroughs — impacting 300 riders.

NYC Transit, however,

could cut 14 of its 244 routes and reduce 100 others, impacting 200,000 riders.

"It probably isn't fair, but it's the reality of the funding," said William Henderson, of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA.

MTA spokesman Aaron Donovan said the cuts were spread evenly, as each division was asked to slash 4.6 percent in spending. But with a smaller budget, MTA Bus didn't have to make as many cuts as NYC Tran-

sit, which runs most bus routes.

"There are quite a few empty seats," said Michelle Luga, 30, who rides the QM17, an MTA Bus Co. line that costs \$23 a person to run to Far Rockaway.

The MTA formed the MTA Bus Co. in 2005 after the city took over the private bus lines. While MTA runs the buses, the city pays for costs not covered by the fares, paying \$388 million last year, documents show.

As a result, the MTA will

keep operating routes such as the QM12 to Forest Hills, which costs \$24 a day to run per passenger and averages 14 riders a trip.

"People need this bus. It'd kill me if it was discontinued," said Elisa Dunne, 43, a Queens express bus rider.

A mayoral spokesman said the city would support merging the bus company with NYC Transit. Donovan said the MTA has no immediate plans to combine the divisions, but is studying it.

Julie Borovskaya contributed to this story.

### WHAT RIDES COST

A comparison of the cost per passenger on bus lines that will be spared cuts:

MTA Bus Co.	NYC Transit
• Busiest: QM1, 26,215 riders, \$3.45	• Busiest: B46, 67,080 riders, \$2.18
• Least busy: QM1B, 273 riders, \$30.24	• Least busy: X64, 450 riders, \$22.20



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**Tourney tip-off**  
**Guide to all 16 Big East teams**  
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Andy Rautins (AP/WIDE WORLD)



**Cool doormats that will floor you**  
 Page 15



# PRESSING PROBLEM

**As station agents vanish, riders must rely on call boxes — but try to find one** Page 3

## Big house for Lil Wayne: Rapper starts stint at Rikers



Lil Wayne is hauled off to prison yesterday. (AP)

With a quick bow to supporters, Grammy Award-winning rapper Lil Wayne was led from a Manhattan courtroom in handcuffs yesterday to begin a yearlong jail term in a 2007 gun case.

Wayne pleaded guilty in October to attempted criminal possession of a weapon, admitting that he had a loaded .40-caliber semiautomatic gun on his tour bus in midtown in July 2007.

"He knew what he had to do, and he's doing it," said his lawyer, Stacey Richman, outside the courthouse.

Wayne, 27, will serve his sentence at Rikers Island, possibly in protective custody, his lawyer said.

The prolific rap star, born Dwayne Carter, could be released in about eight months with good behavior. Wayne left fans with great fanfare, from a "farewell tour" to a series of videos on the Web site Ustream on Sunday.

"Law is mind without reason ... I'll return," he wrote on his Twitter account yesterday. (AP)



A sign at the 42nd Street A line subway station points straphangers to the customer assistance intercom. (PHOTOS: LAUREN A. SMITH)

# Help is not on the way

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

It's not as simple as a push of a button.

The subway intercoms that straphangers must increasingly rely on for help have left many riders stumped about how to use them — if they can find them at all.

"I've never noticed it," said Queens rider Maryanne Bannon, 58. "Most New Yorkers are not trained for this."

With the MTA poised to lay off 450 station agents by May, the agency has advised commuters needing help to use the "customer assistance intercoms" located in many stations.

In a small survey of straphangers by amNewYork, no one was familiar with the boxes.

"They have to come up



Transit union officials say help boxes are prone to breaking.

with a better design. It's not consumer friendly," said Karl Kroebusch, 54, a Park Slope rider.

Even MTA CEO Jay Walder recently admitted that he had a hard time finding the intercom in a station he frequents, saying he was "disappointed" by the system.

"We've almost hidden them away," Walder said.

A call can take awhile to reach a token clerk, and if the worker is busy it has to be rerouted to transit's command center, said Maurice Jenkins, the head of the union's stations department. The boxes are mounted so low that it's awkward to speak into them, he said.

"It takes a while just to get through, and meanwhile

someone is beating you to death," Jenkins said.

The boxes are prone to breaking, with an entire bank of them out recently, union officials said. Furthermore, many stations where agents are being removed don't have the safety devices installed yet, said MTA board member Andrew Albert. "Before we remove booth agents, we should have a method of contacting the police," Albert said.

The MTA could not provide numbers on how many intercoms there are in the system and how many are defective by press time. NYC Transit will install 42 more intercoms at entrances that lack them and will design better signs for the boxes, its spokesman said. The intercoms are regularly maintained, he added.

Julia Baronsky contributed to this story.

## 'Will & Grace' star is 'out'

The actor who played the flamboyantly gay neighbor on the groundbreaking sitcom "Will & Grace" has come out of the closet himself — though he insists he was never in.

Sean Hayes, who played Jack McFarland on the show — a huge hit on NBC that placed its gay leading characters squarely in the mainstream culture — appears on the April cover of The Advocate to finally discuss his sexual orientation.

The magazine had been critical of Hayes, 39, for never before addressing the subject, though he never denied he was gay.

"I feel like I've contributed monumentally to the success of the gay movement... and if anyone wants to argue that, I'm open to it," Hayes told the magazine. "What more do you want me to do? Do you want me to stand on a float?" (AP)



Hayes (AP)

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# Why We Must Save Station Agents!



**In the New York City subways, Station Agents are the eyes and ears of the Police Department.** As recent news stories have documented, half of all video cameras don't work, call boxes are hard to find, and fare evasion is skyrocketing – rising from \$7 million lost to fare beaters in 2008 to \$27 million last year. Station Agents solve these problems by providing a human presence in the subway system, yet the MTA wants to fire 450 of these workers. The MTA refuses to use available federal stimulus money to stop the layoffs and service cuts. We urge the Legislature to act to prevent a sharp decline in safety and a mounting loss of revenue.

## Safety

Stations and platforms without Station Agents are breeding grounds for crime and accidents. Station Agents are the most important link in the chain of response to any incident threatening the safety of passengers. They are in direct contact with the Command Center to get Police, Fire and EMS to the scene within minutes. The MTA promised to put security cameras in locations without Station Agents. But last week, the MTA admitted that half of its 4,313 closed circuit security cameras don't work. And the ones that do work only record. In other words, they can't be monitored for immediate response. Only Station Agents can do that.

## Service

Station Agents are the face of New York City Transit and the entire MTA in our vast subway system. They help passengers every day: issuing cards when vending machines break down, finding lost children, helping tourists navigate, enabling the disabled to navigate through turnstiles. Removing them from the booths, stations, and platforms is removing the all-important human element in our subway system.

## Security

Station Agents are especially important in this era of terrorism. Systems in Madrid, London, Tokyo, Russia and India have all been attacked with devastating results. The recent case of terrorist Najibullah Zazi, convicted of plotting to bomb the New York subways, is an example of why the MTA's policy is misguided and dangerous. Without its "eyes and ears" the system will be deaf and blind when it counts the most.

## Savings

The projected budget for the New York City Transit Authority for fiscal 2010 is \$11.8 billion. By laying off Station Agents, the MTA claims savings of \$9.1 million for 2009, and \$13.2 million for 2010. This is only one tenth of one percent of the overall budget – a ridiculously small amount for such a major negative impact on our subway system.



**TWU LOCAL 100**

80 West End Avenue, New York, NY 10023  
[www.twulocal100.org](http://www.twulocal100.org)

John Samuelson, *President*



**One Hundred Eleventh Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515**

March 11, 2010

Mr. Jay H. Walder  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Metropolitan Transportation Authority  
347 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10017-3739

Dear Chairman Walder:

As Members of the Committee on Homeland Security, we are writing to express our concerns about the potential security implications of planned reductions in Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) personnel. We appreciate that MTA is attempting to address a significant budget shortfall while operating the Nation's largest transit system, but unintended consequences may compromise the security of MTA's 70,000 employees and millions of daily passengers. We understand that difficult decisions must be made to meet the budget challenges created by current economic circumstances so our concern rests solely with cuts to front-line employees and the potential security vulnerabilities that could arise as a result.

We have learned that a number of reductions in staff are being executed by attrition, including several hundred station customer assistants, station agents, and supervisors, which will result in limited or reduced hours of human presence at station booths. Further, we understand that staffing cuts will continue over the next few months, extending to hundreds of toll booth positions and a number of administrative positions.

Although our domestic transit systems have thus far been spared, deadly terrorist attacks in Spain, Great Britain, India and Russia over the last few years have emphasized the vulnerabilities of public transportation in large urban areas and demonstrated the security challenges unique to these open, passenger-heavy systems. The case of Najibullah Zazi is a chilling reminder that our transit systems are targets of al Qaeda and its affiliates. While front-line employees cannot, on their own, monitor the entire system, they are an important link in the transit security chain that is essential to securing that which our adversaries seek to attack.

We would like to emphasize that these cuts may create gaps in the layered security infrastructure of local stations and the MTA system as a whole. A human presence is important for securing an open transit environment, since employees can serve as the eyes-and-ears of the system as they carry out their duties, particularly where implementation of an electronic security program has been delayed. As such, it is our view that reducing front-line personnel should be a last resort budget saving measure.

In past hearings and meetings involving the State of New York, the New York Police Department, the Port Authority, and Transport Workers Union, our Committee has focused on collaboration among partners, layered security, and infrastructure protection as key aspects to securing rail and transit systems. We commend the efforts of MTA over the last decade to implement an effective layered approach to security for the protection of its passengers, employees, and infrastructure. Like you, we recognize that difficult choices must be made in order to preserve important security priorities when resources are scarce. We strongly urge you to re-evaluate the current plans for reducing front-line employees and encourage you to seek an alternative mechanism for closing the budget gap.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security



Sheila Jackson Lee  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Transportation Security  
and Infrastructure Protection



Yvette D. Clarke  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Emerging Threats,  
Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER  
THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

THE CHIEF-LEADER, FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2010

### Rallies Outside MTA Hearing TWU Warns of Danger Of Cutting Staff in Subways

By ARI PAUL

The message transit workers brought to the riding public March 4 was that the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's long-term plan to reduce the workforce is, in fact, a matter of life and death.

With the apocalyptic lyrics of The Clash's "London Calling" blasting from the PA system down Seventh Ave. in the Garment District, several of the more-than 500 Transport Work-

ers Union Local 100 members rallying outside the last public hearing on the MTA budget cuts held signs saying, "Cameras don't save lives, people do. Save Station Agents," with a photo of an exploded bus, the remnants of the 2005 terrorist attack on the London transit system that killed 52 people.

The back side of the same sign asked

(Continued on Page 9)



The Chief-Leader/Andrew Hinderaker  
MTA GOING THE WRONG WAY: Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelson criticizes Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman and CEO Jay Walder's stance that certain transit titles had become outmoded. 'Walder envisions a New York City Transit system with as few human beings as possible,' he said.

ominously, "London 2005 Bombing, Walder's in Charge. Now in New York?" pointing out that MTA Chairman and CEO Jay Walder was an executive at Transport of London during the attack. The union's argument is that with layoff notices sent to 450 Station Agents—with another 500 administrative and non-union staff also set to be let go—the entire subway system will become less safe, with fewer eyes and ears to watch and deter crime and terrorism.

An MTA spokesman did not respond to those assertions.

Local 100 President John Samuelson, in an interview before last week's demonstration outside the Fashion Institute of Technology, denied reports that the MTA offered him the King Solomon-like proposal of averting the booth-worker cuts by accepting One-Person Train Operation, eliminating the Conductor title, but noted that Mr. Walder was pushing for OPTO regardless.

"Walder envisions a New York City Transit system with as few human beings as possible," he said. "Walder's idea of customer service is digitalized signs on station platforms directing people where to go rather than human beings assisting people in the event of a crime or a catastrophe."

#### Thinks Conductor's Obsolete

Mr. Samuelson recalled that he had



JAY WALDER: Overlooking safety risks of cuts?

Continued on reverse



The Chief-Leader/Andrew Hinderaker

**INVITING TERROR?:** Transit workers protesting outside the last public hearing on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority service cut last week suggested that the loss of Station Agents would make the subway system more susceptible to crime and terrorism, noting that MTA chief Jay Walder was an executive at Transport of London during the 2005 terrorist attack on the system there.

asked Mr. Walder for an example of an antiquated work rule that he would like to see scrapped, a call he has made since the MTA board approved the doomsday budget that includes drastic service cuts.

"His response was the Conductor was an antiquated work rule. And of course my response to him was that actually the Conductor is a civil service title, not a work rule, and they provide a vital service to the riding passengers of New York City," he said.

The MTA has argued that these jobs are low on the transit worker totem pole; Station Agents are being made redundant as MetroCards are purchased with machines, and many subway systems worldwide operate smoothly and safely with one worker on each train rather than two.

Local 100 Vice President for Stations Maurice Jenkins offered an impassioned defense of Station Agents to the crowd of workers gathered on Seventh Ave., arguing that empty stations would create a "hostile" environment.

#### Invokes '70s 'Adventure' Rides

"Mr. Walder, he's got to recognize, this job is sacred," he shouted. "Does anybody here remember the '70s? Every time you had to take the train,

it wasn't a trip, it was an adventure, because you were lucky you got home."

It isn't just rider safety, the union argues. Tommy McNally, a Local 100 safety rep, noted that workers in subway tunnels depend on nearby Station Agents as the first people to contact emergency responders if there is a worksite accident.

As for OPTO, which the MTA had wanted to include in the current contract but was not part of a recent arbitration award, Local 100 Rapid Transit Operations Vice President Kevin Harrington said that a Train Operator cannot safely drive the train and open and close the doors.

#### 'Can't See That Far Back'

"The Train Operator can only be in one part of the train," he said in an interview. "You just can't see that far back. Even if you put TVs up they're not going to work for that distance."

He dismissed the idea that because OPTO works in other cities it could work for New York City Transit, saying, "New York City moves the number of people that live in those towns every day. No offense to Washington D.C., but it's a village."

And there's an additional safety issue, Mr. Harrington said, recalling that

when he was working as a Train Operator on the 4 line on 9/11, evacuating passengers "would not have been possible without the Conductor and the Station Agent who came out to help."

Rider advocates have blasted the Station Agent layoffs, and some have their reservations about OPTO. "In general we've been OPTO skeptical," said Gene Russianoff, the attorney for the Straphangers Campaign.

#### '10-Car Trains, Curving Stations'

He said that on a family trip to Paris, where the Metro has one worker on each train, he noticed that "the difference there is that their trains are like four or five cars long and their stations are straight as an arrow," and that the same system would pose safety problems in the city where there are "10-car trains and curving stations."

Benjamin Kabak wrote recently on his transit blog, Second Ave. Sagas, that while there would be savings labor-wise with OPTO, the MTA would have to spend more in other areas.

"The MTA would have to pay its train drivers a few dollars more per hour to serve as the lone Conductor/driver, and Transit would have to outfit it stations by moving the [closed circuit televisions] currently in place in the center of platforms to the front of the trains," he said. "The one-time costs might be substantial, but the savings would be realized on an annual basis."

Union members rallied at the MTA budget hearings around the city, insisting that the agency use capital funds to offset the operational budget deficit, though Mr. Walder has rejected this concept outright, saying that such a move ruined the system's infrastructure in the 1970s. He has argued that instead the State Legislature needs to come up with other long-term funding streams for the MTA.

#### 'Delay Megaprojects'

But Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1056 President Daneek Miller said during a hearing on the budget cuts in Queens March 2 that money was being wasted on big projects that could afford to be delayed.

"Initiatives such as the 7 line expansion, Second Ave. and East Side Access, Fulton St., must take a back seat to capital needs that address existing service," he said in his testimony. "The MTA must also re-think the megaprojects in the capital program before imposing any cuts to existing bus and subway service."



DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN THE SUBWAY? A YES OR NO  
Using your cell phone, text your vote, A or B, to amNY (2668)



Guys, it's time for  
a spring makeover  
Page 16

You'll soon know  
if cabbie's a cheat  
Page 3

LT bolsters Jets  
running game  
Page 22



# False sense of SECURITY

Almost half of the MTA's subway cameras don't work, adding  
to safety fears as agency cuts 600 station agents Page 9

(GETTY)

# Cams turn blind eye to crimes

Nearly half of the security cameras in the subway don't work, raising safety fears

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Down in the subway, Big Brother isn't watching.

Nearly half of the 4,313 security cameras installed in the subway aren't working because they are unable to power up or are suffering from software glitches, the MTA said yesterday. The need to have more surveillance in the system is a priority for transit advocates as the MTA prepares to cut 600 station agents in May.

"Now there's neither people nor cameras," said Gene Russtanoff, of the Straphangers Campaign.

In the past decade, the MTA has installed cameras across the system at subway turnstiles, platforms and tunnels to combat crime and fare beating.

But of the 2,000 cameras that only record footage and are placed around the turnstiles, nearly half aren't working because they were never fully rigged, MTA spokesman Kevin Ortiz said.

"What's the point of putting them up there if they don't work?" asked Quincy Calimesa, 27, a straphanger from the South Bronx.

The dead zones include 23 key sta-

tions, such as 53rd Street-Seventh Avenue in Manhattan, where two violent crimes have occurred in the last four months, according to union officials who service the security cameras.

The MTA declined to talk about surveillance in specific locations, but Ortiz said that the agency will soon award a contract to get some 900 turnstile cameras up and running.

Another 1,100 cameras located throughout the system that would send live feeds and allow officials to monitor activity in real time are not working because of a software glitch, Ortiz said.

The MTA is in a legal dispute with the contractor, Lockheed Martin, but the agency is working with another contractor to make them live. Ortiz couldn't say when the work will be finished.

Meanwhile, Ortiz maintains that the subway is as safe as it has been in decades. There were 2,034 major crimes in the subways last year, a 55 percent decrease from 1999, transit data show.

Julia Baronskaya contributed to this story.



A security camera, left, sits above the 53rd Street-Seventh Avenue station, where two violent crimes occurred recently. (PATRICK MCELROY)



Riders will be alerted if they're overcharged. (TIMOTHY J. SMITH)

## New alert to help cab riders fight rip-offs

BY EMILY NGO  
emily.ngo@am-ny.com

Within two weeks, taxi passengers will start getting alerts telling them whether they're being ripped off.

As part of the city's crackdown on taxi overcharging, riders will see a backseat-screen message if their driver switches to the more expensive out-of-town fare, which is reserved for trips outside of the five boroughs.

The change comes after a Taxi and Limousine Commission probe found thousands of cabbies routinely ripped off unsuspecting customers to the tune of \$8.3 million over 26 months, or about \$4 to \$5 per trip.

The scheme was perpetrated by pressing the button for the higher rate, or Code No. 4, which is double the usual city fare.

Cab drivers yesterday said the new policy won't curb the

### TAXI TIPS

- Check the rate code on the right or left of the meter to make sure it reads "1," not "4."
- Legit extra surcharges: a 50 cent MTA tax per ride, a 50 cent evening charge for rides from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. on weekdays, and a \$1 peak fare fee from 4 to 8 p.m. on weekdays.

(HEATHER HADDON) problem because they insist it's largely unintentional. It's easy for a distracted driver

to enter the wrong code because the meter buttons are close together, said driver Emmanuel Emeka, 51.

"These guys creating the rules, they don't know what's actually happening on the streets," said Emeka.

The TLC will impose fines and revoke the licenses of serious offenders and is working to refund those customers who paid by credit card.

Heather Haddon contributed to this story.

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RACING FINAL

Breezy, some clouds, 55/42. Tuesday, March 16, 2010

# DAILY NEWS

# SUBWAY SHOCKER

- 4 times as many fare-beaters as thought
- \$27M lost could stop train service cuts

**EXCLUSIVE — SEE PAGE 5**

(article on reverse)

# CHEATERS COST MTA MILLIONS

## Fare-beaters underestimated for years

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

FOR YEARS, NYC Transit has wildly underestimated how often riders beat the fare, which cheats the cash-crunched agency out of millions of dollars, the Daily News has learned.

Fare-beaters jump turnstiles or enter through emergency exit gates about 19 million times a year, a new agency analysis shows.

That's far more than the old estimate of about 5 million a year, which went out the window in April, when agency bean counters changed the way they tally scofflaws.

The lost revenue is staggering. Fare-beating deprived NYC Transit of approximately \$27 million last year alone, based on an average subway fare of \$1.48, according to the new analysis.

Under the old method of estimating fare-beating, the agency believed it was losing about \$7 million a year.

The lost revenue is even larger than the amount the Metropolitan Transportation Authority plans to save with subway service cuts that are scheduled to go into effect soon to help plug a large budget gap.

Some paying straphangers fumed yesterday when told about thievery at the turnstiles.

"It makes me mad because I have to pay for them," said 44-year-old Bronx baby-sitter Eleac Ramirez.

Others at the 49th St. N- and R-train station in Manhattan said they're also peeved at authorities for not staffing many entrances.

"There should be a guard there," Thomas DeMarcus, a 30-year-old Queens actor, said at the unstaffed 47th St. entrance to the station.

The unstaffed station turned harried Long Island parents Maria and Oscar Garces into fare-beaters.

The couple, struggling with a stroller yesterday, could find no token booth clerk to open the door. So Maria Garces swiped her MetroCard and then let in her husband, who did not pay a fare.

"It's hard," Garces said. NYC Transit for years arrived at fare-beating figures by using a formula based on the observations of token booth clerks. A one-day count was conducted each month, agency spokesman Paul Fleuranges said.

An MTA audit concluded the agency was way off the mark. Clerks weren't keeping accurate tallies because they had other duties like selling MetroCards, Fleuranges said. Because of staff cuts, there also are fewer clerks to make observations, Fleuranges said.

Despite the cuts in personnel and the massive increase in fare-beating numbers, Fleuranges insisted the system has not seen a spike in actual turnstile-jumping.

Instead, he said, an unreliable system of estimating has been replaced with a better method that provides a more realistic picture.

NYC Transit now uses "traffic checkers" who are randomly placed at a sampling of turnstiles to count fare-beaters, Fleuranges said.

The MTA passed a budget in December that includes \$17.6 million in subway service cuts and millions more in bus service cuts.

The moves include adding two minutes to the waits for lettered-line subway trains on weekends, eliminating W-train service and shortening the G line.

The authority also plans to lay off up to 450 token booth agents.

"The MTA's only going to make jumping the turnstile more inviting by slashing scores of clerks from subway station entrances," Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign warned.

With Stephanie Gaskell  
pdonohue@nydailynews.com



## Up for the count

	Ridership	Fare evasion rate	Estimated number of fare-beaters	Lost revenue 2008
2008	1.62 billion	.32%	5.2 million	\$7 million*
2009	1.58 billion	1.2%	18.9 million	\$27 million**

\*old method of calculating fare-beating

\*\*New method and higher rate calculated for

April-June 2009. Final numbers not yet available.

Source: NYC Transit



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RACING FINAL

Mail, 47/37, Monday, March 15, 2010

## DAILY NEWS

Monday, March 15, 2010

# Transit workers back free fares for students

BY RACHEL MONAHAN  
and PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

THE CITY'S BUS drivers and subway workers have joined the fight to keep free student MetroCards.

Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union has filed a petition asking the state education czar to force the city to increase its \$45 million contribution for the program, union officials said.

The program is on track to be phased out by September 2011.

"The City of New York has a responsibility to ensure that our children have the means to get to school," union President John Samuelsen said yesterday.

The state's \$45 million share dipped to \$6 million last year.

Samuelsen's members stand to

lose if MTA finances continue to go south — and they also have kids in public schools and may struggle to pay commuting costs, he said.

For years, the MTA has footed the bulk of the bill for the program that offers three free trips every school day to approximately 585,000 city students.

The MTA is now struggling with its own budget crunch, and officials have said it can no longer afford the \$214 million it loses annually to the program.

Marc La Vorgna, a spokesman for Mayor Bloomberg, said the mayor continues to oppose cutting the student MetroCard program.

"The city has kept its funding in place," La Vorgna said. "The city has been doing its part that the program stays in place."

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)



Mar 15

## Labor lends a powerful voice to the Student MetroCard fight

By Benjamin Kabak

As the MTA counts down the days to the elimination of the Student MetroCard program, the Transport Workers Union Local 100 is lending its powerful voice to the fight. As Rachel Monahan and Pete Donohue of the *Daily News* detail, union officials have asked the state to increase its contributions to student transit. "The City of New York has a responsibility to ensure that our children have the means to get to school," TWU head John Samuelsen said.

Labor is entering this fray because TWU members know that a healthy MTA is will only help them and because many of the union members are parents who will be forced to pay for student transit if the city and state don't pony up the dough for this program. While a Bloomberg spokesperson defended the city's \$45 million contribution as "doing its part [so] that the program stays in place," the truth remains that the city pays far more per student for yellow school bus transportation than it does for student MetroCards. The MTA is not a school bus provider, and the city and state should ensure that this program is fully funded. The TWU's support on this issue could help tip the money the MTA's way.



▶ A passenger waits at the JMZ platform in Chinatown.

# Drastic changes just down tracks

▶ MTA votes Wednesday on 'worst cuts in 30 years' says one rider advocate ▶ V train gone, replaced by orange M

On Wednesday, MTA board members will cast a historic vote on \$94 million worth of service cuts, slashing bus routes and restructuring dozens more.

"These are the worst service cuts I've seen in thirty years as a transit advocate in New York City," said Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign.

If all the proposed changes pass, riders will see longer wait times and more crowded trains and buses, especially on nights and weekends.

After thousands testified at public hearings this month, the MTA made some revisions to their doomsday cuts.

## 2

A two-minute longer wait time between many weekend trains is forecast by the MTA. It could easily balloon into an added 10 minutes if trains bunch up, said Albert. Fewer trains will also mean fewer open seats for riders.

In the most dramatic change, the V line will be axed and the M line will take its place. The M will change to an orange line, instead of brown.

Eleven bus routes previously on the chopping

block will also be saved.

But the last-minute revisions aren't enough, say some.

"This is as if you went into a small town and told residents we're taking 25 percent of your cars away," said board member Andrew Albert. "There's no hope, no talk of bailout from the state."

The MTA may have to raise the fare this year, say some board members, something the MTA denies. A 7.5 percent fare hike is already planned for 2011.

A vote to start charging for student MetroCards has been pushed back to June.



CARLY BALDWIN  
carly.baldwin@metro.us

### Biggest change



V train eliminated. The train will continue to run through Queens and northern Brooklyn, but Essex Street on the Low East Side, it will switch the V train's route uptown and into Queens.

M service eliminated in lower Manhattan and southern Brooklyn.

W train eliminated. The will run local to replace north of Canal Street.

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In the news

## Slain by her abuser

A woman who took back her abusive boyfriend after taking refuge in a domestic violence shelter became the victim of an alleged murder-suicide, the Daily News reported Thursday. The 31-year-old mother of two was found on the bedroom floor of her Bedford-Stuyvesant apartment. **BY METRO**

In the news



## Art dealer guilty

Art dealer Lawrence Salander, accused of the largest art fraud in New York history, pleaded guilty Thursday. He could receive up to 18 years in prison and must pay restitution of \$120 million. He took loans using artwork he didn't own as security and sold shares in paintings he didn't own. Tennis star John McEnroe was among his victims. **BY METRO**

# Something smells funny at bake sale

► Angry parents, students protest city ban on home cooking ► Doritos are OK, but mom's zucchini bread is out? ► City says it's fighting obesity

Forget making your famous seven-layer bars or empanadas for your child's school fundraiser. The city that cut our fat intake, and wants to curb the salt in our food, is monitoring bake sales.

A regulation passed last month bans home-baked goods from public school bake sales. Health and education officials say they're combating an obesity epidemic. But parents are outraged that prepackaged snack items like Doritos and Pop-Tarts are A-OK.

"This isn't a natural way to relate to food," said Courtney McDowell, a mother of two at PS 364 in the East Village. "We're teaching children to reach for packaged goods instead of to cook. That's not healthy."

Single-serving snacks with under 200 calories are the only things allowed at school bake sales. School officials say they just don't know how much butter or salt parents put in home-baked goodies.

Bake sales for clubs and teams are more important than ever as schools face tighter budgets. On Thursday, parents, kids and teachers rallied outside City Hall to protest the new rule.

Members of the PTA are allowed to hold a no-holds-barred bake sale — selling whatever they want — once a month, as long as they're well away from the cafeteria. But school teams and clubs must stick to the packaged stuff at all times.



**CARLY BALDWIN**  
carly.baldwin@metro.us

## What's for sale?

In New York City public schools, chocolate cake is now contraband. Here's a sampling of what's allowed to be sold at bake sales now:

- Whole Grain Brown Sugar Cinnamon Pop-Tarts

- Doritos Cool Ranch Reduced Fat chips
- Chewy Quaker Oats Peanut Butter/Chocolate Chip granola bar
- Frito Lay Baked Cheddar Sour Cream Chips
- Linden's Butter Crunch cookies
- All the fruits and veggies you want!



► East Village Community School students Lark Piat-Kolly, 7, left, and Maria Majloja, 7, protest the citywide ban on bake sales Thursday.

## Oh, it's just cops again

Police went to the home of an elderly couple over 50 times since 2002. Why? A computer glitch, the NYPD told the New York Post on Thursday. Cops are investigating why their Brooklyn address pops up when suspects' names are typed into the system. **BY METRO/AS**

## Advocates call on MTA to protect straphangers

With rising subway crime — including last week's mugging and shooting at the 7th Ave. stop at 53rd St. — and \$27 million worth of fare evasion, station security must be improved, public advocate Bill de Blasio and transit advocates said Thursday. Plans to lay off 750 station agents are "pen-

ny wise and pound foolish," de Blasio said, noting that more than half of security cameras in stations don't work. "The MTA shouldn't be placing profits ahead of people," said Oraia Reid, of New Yorkers for Safe Transit, which fights sexual harassment and assault in the subways. **BY ANNY ZIDORER**

## Savings vs. losses

YEAR	STATION AGENTS CUT	ESTIMATED SAVINGS	\$ LOST TO FARE BEATERS
2008	0	0	\$7 million
2009	212	\$9.1 million	\$27 million
2010	450	\$13.2 million	TBD
2011	300	\$20.7 million	TBD

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MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2010



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Do denim right: Expert tips on donning the blue  
Page 12

Sizing up the 'Idol' finalists  
Page 9

Cinderella story: Cornell makes it to Sweet 16  
Page 20



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# TEEN'S SWIPE-MARE

Kid mugged after refusing to buy illegal ride at station that recently lost agent

Joseph Hatton was robbed at the  
170th Street station in the Bronx.  
(TIFFANY L. CLARK)

am  
NEW YORK  
EXCLUSIVE

Page 3

(Continued on reverse)

# Teen: Swipers robbed me

## Allegedly mugged at station that recently lost watchful agent

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Riders may have to watch their backs a little more with fewer station agents roaming the subways — just ask Joseph Hatton.

Thugs allegedly threatened to toss the Bronx teen to the tracks Friday if he didn't cough up his iPod at a station that once had a worker manning the entrance.

"I was really scared," Joseph, 15, said yesterday. "I really didn't know what to do."

On Friday morning, the high school student was en route to his grandmother's house when a pack of men offered to sell him a MetroCard swipe for \$2 at the 170th Street station in the Bronx. When he refused, the ringleader demanded the lanky teen give up his money because he "had bills to pay and things to buy," Joseph said.

Then the robber allegedly demanded Joseph hand over his new iPod — or he would be thrown on the tracks and beaten up.

"There was no one there to help my child, no one to scream on the speakers," said the teen's mother, Tawana Alston, 32.

Last year the MTA removed the



Joseph Hatton revisits the 170th Street D line station, where he was robbed. A booth is unmanned there. (TIFFANY L. CLARK)

### UNDERGROUND CRIME

Robberies in the subways in January and February:

- 2010: 126
  - 2009: 123
- Up 2 percent

Total arrests in the subways in January and February:

- 2010: 8,094
  - 2009: 7,598
- Up 7 percent

SOURCE: NYPD TRANSIT BUREAU

agent manning the station, and now the kiosk is wrapped in chains.

Now, the MTA intends to lay off

600 station agents by May and close up to 70 booths, including in remote stations in the Bronx.

At Hatton's 170th Street station, the nearest clerk is on the mezzanine level, and riders were jumping the gates of the unmanned entrance in droves yesterday.

"You call us the eyes and ears, but [the MTA] is making sure our system is deaf and blind," said Maurice Jenkins, a transit union rep.

Joseph handed over his iPod and managed to escape unharmed. Police later arrested Justin Smith,

19, for the alleged mugging. He was charged with robbery, harassment and other offenses.

Subway crime has plummeted and all stations will continue to have at least one clerk on duty at all hours, NYC Transit spokesman Paul Fleuranges said.

"We continue to work with the NYPD on... targeting high-incidence locations and placing cameras in key areas," Fleuranges said.

An NYPD spokesman said that all crooks caught selling swipes are arrested.

6 Saturday, March 20, 2010

## DAILY NEWS

### Subways are crime-free, sez Bloomy

SUBWAY CRIME doesn't exist!

That's the claim Mayor Bloomberg made on WOR radio yesterday, saying "there is no crime on the subway from a practical sense."

Bloomberg, a frequent 6-train commuter, was responding to a question about whether crime would increase if the MTA cuts 450 token booth clerks as planned.

He estimated there are five crimes a day on subways — "given that we have five million people that take the subway a day, that

He credited the NYPD and transit workers for keeping subways safe — even though the Daily News reported this week that cops are handing out fewer fare-evasion tickets even as officials say more riders are beating fares.

The cash-strapped MTA is threatening to cut the clerks to save money, a move Bloomberg defended.

"You can say, 'Well let's not cut that.' Excuse me, what do you want to cut?" he said.

# Bloomberg in denial

# Teen: Swipers robbed me

Allegedly mugged at station that recently lost watchful agent

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

Riders may have to watch their backs a little more with fewer station agents roaming the subways — just ask Joseph Hatton.

Thugs allegedly threatened to toss the Bronx teen to the tracks Friday if he didn't cough up his iPod at a station that once had a worker manning the entrance.

"I was really scared," Joseph, 15, said yesterday. "I really didn't know what to do."

On Friday morning, the high school student was en route to his grandmother's house when a pack of men offered to sell him a MetroCard swipe for \$2 at the 170th Street station in the Bronx. When he refused, the ringleader demanded the lanky teen give up his money because he "had bills to pay and things to buy," Joseph said.

Then the robber allegedly demanded Joseph hand over his new iPod — or he would be thrown on the tracks and beaten up.

"There was no one there to help my child, no one to scream on the speakers," said the teen's mother, Tawana Alston, 32.

Last year the MTA removed the



Joseph Hatton revisits the 170th Street D line station, where he was robbed. A booth is unmanned there. (TIFFANY L. CLARK)

## UNDERGROUND CRIME

Robberies in the subways in January and February:

- 2010: 126
  - 2009: 123
- Up 2 percent

Total arrests in the subways in January and February:

- 2010: 8,094
  - 2009: 7,598
- Up 7 percent

SOURCE: NYPD TRANSIT BUREAU

agent manning the station, and now the kiosk is wrapped in chains.

Now, the MTA intends to lay off

600 station agents by May and close up to 70 booths, including in remote stations in the Bronx.

At Hatton's 170th Street station, the nearest clerk is on the mezzanine level, and riders were jumping the gates of the unmanned entrance in droves yesterday.

"You call us the eyes and ears, but [the MTA] is making sure our system is deaf and blind," said Maurice Jenkins, a transit union rep.

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An NYPD spokesman said that all crooks caught selling swipes are arrested.

# V train rolling to last stop?

After an eight-year run, the V train will likely bow out of the system, potentially causing longer waits and more crowding in Brooklyn and Queens.

The MTA is expected to merge the M train with the V. The line would run as the M from Middle Village in Queens to Essex Street and then swap over to the V tracks on its way to Forest Hills-71st Avenue in Queens. The change will decrease the amount of subway service for southern Brooklyn riders, causing 22,000 straphangers to wait longer for a train and forcing 28,000 others to make an extra transfer for lower Manhattan, MTA data show.

The area of Brooklyn that will be cut off from the old M route is rapidly developing, and transit advocates expected the crowding to get brutal.

An NYC Transit spokesman said that the trains will still follow agency guidelines for sufficient space onboard, and the MTA would consider increasing Brooklyn service on the D or R if ridership grows.

(HEATHER HADDON)

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## BRAMHALL'S WORLD



# The 9/11 lawyers deserve praise

In light of Judge Alvin Hellerstein's stunning Friday ruling rejecting the legal settlement of 10,000 workers injured in the post-9/11 search, rescue and cleanup efforts, it is time to reassess the agreement — including the legal fees paid to the plaintiffs' attorneys.

The judge said he feared that too much of the deal would be consumed by legal fees — and worried that Ground Zero responders might be pressured into signing on before understanding just how much money they were due to receive.

Fair enough. But one thing that should not happen is for the plaintiffs' lawyers to have their fees arbitrarily slashed. Instead, it makes far more sense for the City of New York to pick up the heroes' legal bills.

Simply cutting the fees on the theory that the lawyers are being "too greedy" would be unfair and shortsighted in the extreme.

Lost in the impassioned rhetoric against the settlement — much of it directed at the plaintiffs' lawyers — is the simple fact that they have stood with the heroes for the past six years. The same cannot be said for the city's government or its contractors. They opposed the workers, even though the federal government gave the city \$1 billion to cover the workers' losses.

If there are good characters and bad characters in this drama, the workers' law-

## BE OUR GUEST

BY CHARLES SILVER

yers are wearing white hats.

True, the lawyers did not agree to represent the workers for free. Their retainer agreements entitle them to contingent fees equal to one-third of the recovery plus expenses, about \$200 million. New York law expressly deems fees of this level "fair and reasonable," except in medical malpractice cases, where a lower cap applies.

The workers were smart to hire lawyers at the prevailing rate. To understand why, consider one fact: The city paid a high-priced D.C. law firm more than \$200 million to defeat the workers' claims.

In the civil justice system, money counts. Rich litigants defeat poor litigants most of the time. The workers needed to offset the city's enormous spending advantage. A person armed with a pea-shooter has little chance against a tank.

The workers countered the city's gambit by offering their lawyers contingent fees. In fact, they beat the city at its own game. The city took its \$200 million in attorneys' fees from the insurance fund the federal government created. The workers did the same thing. By promising lawyers a fraction of their recoveries, they used the insurance fund to prevent the other side from defeating them by outspending them.

Few people know much about the risks and costs contingent fee lawyers incur. Talking with the workers' attorneys, I learned that they spent more than \$5.15 million on filing fees alone. That was literally the price of opening the door to the U.S. District Court. If they lost the case, they would never have gotten that money back.

All told, the lawyers spent about \$30 million of their own money with no guarantee

of repayment. Why so much? Because for six years the city and its co-defendants fought the workers tooth and nail. For example, I'm told that of the 12 cases scheduled for trial in May, the defendants filed more than 200 motions to dismiss. Scorched earth tactics make lawsuits expensive. They also force plaintiffs' attorneys to expend enormous amounts of time.

The workers' lawyers devoted hundreds of thousands of hours to their clients' cause without receiving a nickel in payment. The defense lawyers, by contrast, bore no such risks. Their expenses were reimbursed as incurred and they were paid by the hour for their time each month.

Congress could have spared the workers the costs they incurred by reopening the

9/11 victims' compensation fund. It did not. The city could have saved them money by renouncing litigation and creating an administrative review process. It did not.

Litigation was the only avenue left, and as everyone knows, litigation is expensive. In fact, compared with many victims, the workers were lucky. The tort system regularly sends deserving plaintiffs home with nothing

**Don't arbitrarily slash their fees; instead, make the city pick up the tab**

Nothing prevents the city from using the insurance fund or other monies to defray the workers' legal fees. By doing so, the city would enable them to keep their recoveries and would spread their legal costs across everyone who benefited from their public service. That seems right to me.

If, however, the court were to cut the lawyers'

fees, attorneys would be discouraged from taking the next big case on contingency. Claimants who cannot afford to pay lawyers by the hour would then find themselves without counsel. And in our civil justice system, a victim without an attorney is unlikely to beat an opponent who has lawyered up.

Silver holds the McDonald Endowed Chair in Civil Procedure at the University of Texas School of Law.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Friday, March 26, 2010

# DAILY NEWS

## Doomed clerks call in 400+ emergencies a day

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

TOKEN BOOTH clerks – whose ranks are being slashed by layoffs – relayed information about subway emergencies nearly 500,000 times in the last three years, the Daily News has learned.

Dealing with everything from sick passengers to suspicious packages to lost children, the clerks used an emergency-only telephone line connecting them to the transit command center an average of 412 times a day last year, data provided by NYC Transit reveal.

Their calls summoned police officers, firefighters, ambulance crews or transit agency workers, depending on the situation.

The MTA is in the process of laying off up to 500 clerks, or station agents, to cut costs. Transit officials insist riders won't be more vulnerable with fewer workers in the booths, citing the NYPD's success in driving crime down to historic lows.

But some transit advocates and transit workers insist the MTA is going the wrong way.

"Riders know to go to a booth clerk to ask for help," Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign said. "Now, they'll have to ask: 'Who you gonna call when most booth clerks are history?'"

At the MTA board meeting Wednesday, clerk Sabrina Greenwood told board members, "I save lives."

Greenwood recalled how she recently helped reunite a mother with her 5-year-old son who had drifted away while she was busy buying a MetroCard in a busy Manhattan station. Greenwood alerted authorities, trains were halted and police found the boy on a train several stops down the line, Greenwood said.

Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelson said that station agents are "a transit rider's first line of defense" against a potential terror attack. "By getting rid of hundreds of station agents, the MTA lessens the chance of preventing an attack," he said.

According to statistics provided by NYC Transit, the emergency booth communication system was activated 173,509 times in 2007, 171,368 times in 2008 and 150,624 times last year.

The agency couldn't immediately describe the nature of those calls or give a breakdown of how many emergencies were behind the numbers. Typically, a clerk "activates" and talks to the control center when reporting a problem.

Clerks may call a second time to let dispatchers know police or other emergency responders have arrived.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

800 - NYDailyNews.com

RACING FINAL

Rain, 47/37, Monday, March 15, 2010

## DAILY NEWS

Monday, March 15, 2010

# Transit workers back free fares for students

BY RACHEL MONAHAN  
and PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

THE CITY'S BUS drivers and subway workers have joined the fight to keep free student MetroCards.

Local 100 of the Transport Workers Union has filed a petition asking the state education czar to force the city to increase its \$45 million contribution for the program, union officials said.

The program is on track to be phased out by September 2011.

"The City of New York has a responsibility to ensure that our children have the means to get to school," union President John Samuelsen said yesterday.

The state's \$45 million share dipped to \$6 million last year.

Samuelsen's members stand to

lose if MTA finances continue to go south — and they also have kids in public schools and may struggle to pay commuting costs, he said.

For years, the MTA has footed the bulk of the bill for the program that offers three free trips every school day to approximately 585,000 city students.

The MTA is now struggling with its own budget crunch, and officials have said it can no longer afford the \$214 million it loses annually to the program.

Marc La Vorgna, a spokesman for Mayor Bloomberg, said the mayor continues to oppose cutting the student MetroCard program.

"The city has kept its funding in place," La Vorgna said. "The city has been doing its part that the program stays in place."

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)



Mar  
15

## Labor lends a powerful voice to the Student MetroCard fight

By Benjamin Kabak

As the MTA counts down the days to the elimination of the Student MetroCard program, the Transport Workers Union Local 100 is lending its powerful voice to the fight. As Rachel Monahan and Pete Donohue of the *Daily News* detail, union officials have asked the state to pressure the city to increase its contributions to student transit. "The City of New York has a responsibility to ensure that our children have the means to get to school," TWU head John Samuelsen said.

Labor is entering this fray because TWU members know that a healthy MTA is will only help them and because many of the union members are parents who will be forced to pay for student transit if the city and state don't pony up the dough for this program. While a Bloomberg spokesperson defended the city's \$45 million contribution as "doing its part [so] that the program stays in place," the truth remains that the city pays far more per student for yellow school bus transportation than it does for student MetroCards. The MTA is not a school bus provider, and the city and state should ensure that this program is fully funded. The TWU's support on this issue could help tip the money the MTA's way.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

18 Saturday, March 27, 2010

DAILY NEWS NYDailyNews.com

# Bus slowdown in Queens

## Angry transit union gums up works with spot checks

74 • NYDailyNews.com SPORTS FINAL Sat., 12/27, Saturday, March 27, 2010  
**DAILY NEWS**

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

TRANSIT WORKERS angry over MTA layoffs and other cost-cutting moves slowed down the morning rush in parts of Queens yesterday, the Daily News has learned.

Before dawn at the College Point bus depot, union officers conducted spot inspections on buses heading to the only exit.

Citing equipment defects, union officers and staff delayed 64

buses by more than an hour, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority confirmed.

The scheduled runs of an additional 16 buses were canceled by managers because of the logjam, the MTA said.

All told, about one-third of the depot's available fleet was affected by what sources said was the biggest action of its kind in years.

After taking office in January, Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen said members would fight management if they tried to close budget gaps with layoffs.

Yesterday, he maintained the equipment inspections were not connected to MTA plans to let go up to 500 token booth clerks and bus drivers later this year.



Hagen for News

MTA buses were delayed up to an hour Friday morning after union officers, angry over MTA layoffs, conducted spot inspections.

"The union has an obligation to provide a safe workplace for our members and a safe bus for the riders, and by doing these inspections, we're living up to our obligation," Samuelsen said.

The union inspections yesterday did reveal numerous defects in turn signals, wheelchair lifts and headlights, Samuelsen claimed.

But a source familiar with the in-

spections acknowledged, "This is the union's way of flexing its muscles." Since January, the union has conducted several bus checks at other depots, according to the union. While it's illegal for a union to intentionally slow service as a show of force, it can be difficult to prove.

Local 100 broke state law by waging a three-day strike in 2005 and was hit with severe financial penalties.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)



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## Transit union strikes back against MTA layoffs with inspections that delayed 64 buses for an hour

BY Pete Donohue  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Saturday, March 27th 2010, 4:00 AM



Hagen for NewsMTA buses were delayed up to an hour Friday morning after union officers, angry over MTA layoffs, conducted spot inspections.

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Local 100 broke state law by waging a three-day strike in 2005 and was hit with severe financial penalties.

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# DAILY NEWS

18 Saturday, March 27, 2010

DAILY NEWS NYDailyNews.com

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BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

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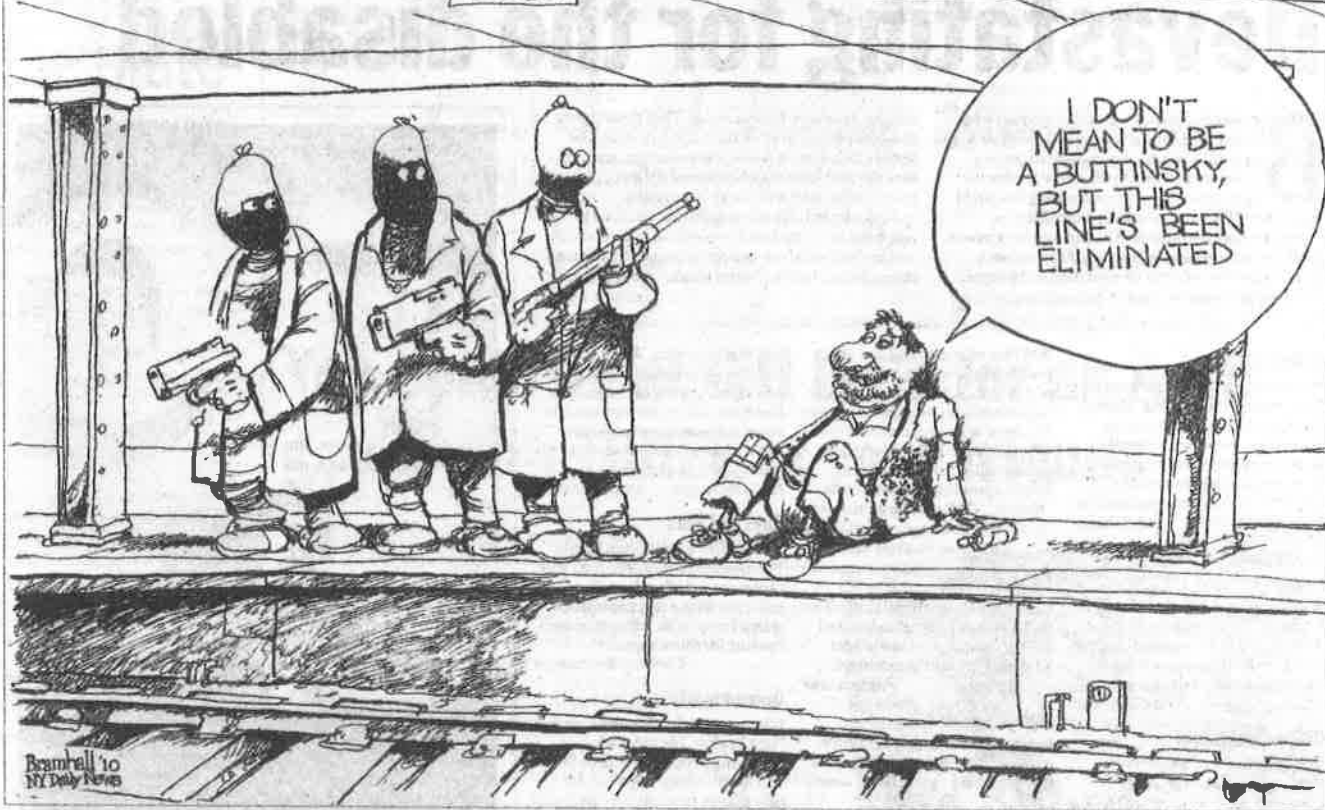
Local 100 broke state law by waging a three-day strike in 2005 and was hit with severe financial penalties.

pdonohue@nydailynews.com

## BRAMHALL'S WORLD

## THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123

2010



# Charters' hypocritical enemies

Visitors to my public charter school often ask how the students feel about the signs on the walls that say: "Failure is not an option." They are surprised to hear that the signs are really for the staff.

As someone who has seen way too many poor children failed by bad schools for decades, I'm delighted to see these kids get the opportunity to go to a school run by talented and motivated professionals, where everyone has some skin in the game.

Nationally, we have more than 1 million students dropping out of high school every year. Even grimmer are findings that 60% of young black men who drop out land in prison by their 30s, and incarceration costs can run more than \$40,000 a year.

The status quo, which got us to this terrible place, is obviously not going to get us out. President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan have taken promising steps at the federal level: creating the Race to the Top initiative to spur wholesale education reform and beginning to revamp the No Child Left Behind Law.

Unfortunately the legislative outlook in New York State is not nearly as hopeful. The state submitted a flawed application for Race to the Top. Yes, we are a finalist — but it is improbable that we will get money unless legislators in Albany remove a number of roadblocks to higher student

## BE OUR GUEST

BY GEOFFREY CANADA

achievement. One of the biggest problems is that the state is currently prohibiting the growth of charter schools.

The United Federation of Teachers, with its lobbying muscle, along with some politicians living in the communities most devastated by failed schools, are the leading voices preventing charter school growth. It is easier for them to scapegoat charter schools than lead the way down the tougher path of education reform. They pretend that charter schools are the problem, ignoring the fact that these same districts have been failing since I was attending Public School 99 in the South Bronx in the 1960s.

As a teenager, I was heading for a drop-out factory and felt I had no chance to succeed. Luckily I had the opportunity to move to Long Island with my grandparents rather than attend Morris High School in the Bronx. Without that choice my life would have turned out very differently. And so would the lives of many of Harlem's current leaders — Gov. Paterson, state Assemblyman Keith Wright and state Sen. Bill Perkins. Like me, they all had choices and opted out of their local public schools.

Perkins, who is now one of charter schools' most vocal opponents, was able to use family connections to attend an upper

East Side middle school, and went on to a private prep school before graduating from Brown University.

Those of us who know firsthand the benefits of school choice should be championing choice. Yet the Black and Puerto Rican/Latino caucuses in Albany are doing the opposite. They supported a bill that would have raised the cap on the number of charter schools but undercut the schools painfully in other ways. A notable exception was state Sen. Ruben Diaz, who helped block passage of the bill.

Charter adversaries charge that the schools are diverting money from traditional public schools. Wrong. My organization raises money for two charters — as well as for support services at nine traditional public schools in our area. I've found that most of the big donations to charter schools are there because of the schools' accountability and results.

If the status quo at traditional public schools remained and the charters' results disappeared, so would these dollars.

Here's a final outrage. Some charter school opponents — crying "separate and unequal" — are inexplicably fighting to stop the closure of failing traditional public schools. I find it hard to believe that charter

schools that are succeeding, but have minor, fixable issues around admitting English Language Learners and Special Education students are condemned — but schools that have failed for decades are rallied around and supported.

It's clear to me that on the merits these opponents' case does not stand up to scrutiny. I find their arguments are weak, inconsistent and insincere.

Charter schools alone cannot fix our broken education system. And certainly there are some lousy charter schools that should be shut down along with lousy public schools. But this is not a zero-sum game: The 3% of children attending charter schools citywide are hardly a

threat to the exponentially larger public school system. The only threat that successful charter schools pose is to the belief that poor, minority children cannot succeed academically on a large scale.

If charter school opponents really want to be helpful, they should focus on the students — children of their constituents — whose futures are diminished daily as they sit in schools where failure is acceptable.

Canada is CEO of Harlem Children's Zone and president of the Promise Academy Charter School.

## Pols who fight school choice had plenty of it themselves

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From: WSJ.com Editors <access@interactive.wsj.com>  
Date: Mar 29, 2010 1:22 AM  
Subject: WSJ NEWS ALERT: Blast on Moscow Subway Kills 25  
To: crinum@juno.com

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News Alert  
from The Wall Street Journal

Moscow emergency officials and Russian news agencies say two explosions hit the Moscow subway system, killing at least 25 people.

Emergency Ministry spokeswoman Irina Andrianova said the dead in the first blast on Monday morning include 14 people who were in the train and another 11 people who were on the platform at the Lubyanka station in central Moscow.

State news agencies ITAR-Tass and RIA Novosti report a second explosion hit the Park Kultury station about 45 minutes later. There was no immediate word on casualties there.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303945204575150870608580444.html?mod=djemalertNEWS>

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**JUNO** Message Center

**From:** Larry Hanley <ATU726@aol.com>

**To:** atularry@aol.com

**Sent:** Mon, Mar 29, 2010 09:04 AM

**Subject:** Bus, rail unions rally for more U.S. transit funding

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***The Coalition to Keep America Moving grows.....!***

## **Bus, rail unions rally for more U.S. transit funding**

Comments

March 29, 2010

SUN-TIMES STAFF

Transit unions representing bus and rail workers are organizing rallies around the country in the next few weeks to push for more federal funding for public transit.

Operation PUSH hosted a rally for more than 500 union workers Saturday, according to Carlos J. Acevedo, maintenance/assistant business agent for Amalgamated Transit Union Local 241, which represents bus workers.

### **RELATED STORIES**

Construction plan concentrates pain

More rallies are planned this week in Portland, Ore., and New York City.

"The concept is to raise public awareness of how bad the situation has gotten and how much worse it can get," said Acevedo. "There's a dire need for funding for public transit."

The unions are supporting a bill by U.S. Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-Mo.) that would allow large public transit agencies to use some of their federal transit funding for operating costs.

Under current law, transit systems in areas with populations of more than 200,000 may not use their federal transit funds for operations.

Last month, the CTA laid off 1,057 workers, primarily from the bus workers union, and cut service to cope with a \$95.6 million budget shortfall.

The State of Illinois owes the CTA, Metra and Pace \$250 million, and the RTA has warned that more service cuts may be necessary this summer if the money doesn't come.



# City advocate: Subtracting clerks equals more subway trouble

**BYERICA PEARSON**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

THE CITY'S PUBLIC advocate has a plan to boost subway security and stop farebeaters — and it doesn't involve any new high-tech equipment.

Instead, Bill de Blasio urged the MTA yesterday to scrap its

budget-cutting plans to lay off hundreds of token booth clerks.

He said that the agency is losing more money when riders jump turnstiles — about \$27 million last year alone, as a Daily News analysis revealed — than it would save by cutting clerks, whose presence could help stop subway crime.

"We're hemorrhaging money because there isn't a human presence in the subway system to stop it," said de Blasio. "They're in a position to see something happen and do something about it."

The MTA said in a statement that token clerks don't necessarily stop fare beating, calling it "an

age-old problem in subway systems around the world" and praising the NYPD for how it oversees subway security.

"But de Blasio — speaking outside the 53rd St. subway stop where a man was mugged and shot last week — said that the MTA's security equipment is of-

ten unreliable, adding that half the subway system's more than 4,000 security cameras don't work.

"What the MTA is doing here is penny wise and pound foolish," he said. "We're going to have a subway system that is less safe." [eperason@nydailynews.com](mailto:eperason@nydailynews.com)



NEW YORK • Weekend, March 19-21, 2010

# Advocates call on MTA to protect straphangers

With rising subway crime — including last week's mugging and shooting at the 7th Ave. stop at 53rd St. — and \$27 million worth of fare evasion, station security must be improved, public advocate Bill de Blasio and transit advocates said Thursday. Plans to lay off 750 station agents are "pen-

ny wise and pound foolish," de Blasio said, noting that more than half of security cameras in stations don't work. "The MTA shouldn't be placing profits ahead of people," said Oraia Reid, of New Yorkers for Safe Transit, which fights sexual harassment and assault in the subways. ● AMY ZIMMER



## Savings vs. losses

YEAR	STATION AGENTS CUT	ESTIMATED SAVINGS	\$ LOST TO FARE BEATERS
2008	0	0	\$7 million
2009	212	\$9.1 million	\$27 million
2010	450	\$13.2 million	TBD
2011	300	\$20.7 million	TBD

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### ANKLEY SAVAGE

It — David B. wife, Tina, made e fact that they litia, neighbors equently let vis- fatigues erect er trailer home n of rural dirt ound of gunfire

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ment against the on Monday, the rument said they group of apocalyp- nilitants who were ll law enforcement pes of inciting an nt uprising, the lat- surge in right-wing y.

iling said the group, itself the Hutaree, kill an unidentified ent officer and then neral caravan using explosive devices igns used against ops by insurgents in ued on Page A16

## AFGHAN LEADER IS SEEN TO FLOUT INFLUENCE OF U.S.

### DIVERGING VIEWS CITED

#### Karzai's Behavior Poses Challenge to Goals of Administration

By DEXTER FILKINS  
and MARK LANDLER

KABUL, Afghanistan — This month, with President Hamid Karzai looking ahead to a visit to the White House, he received a terse note from aides to President Obama: Your invitation has been revoked.

The reason, according to American officials, was Mr. Karzai's announcement that he was emasculating an independent panel that had discovered widespread fraud in Mr. Karzai's re-election last year.

Incensed, Mr. Karzai extended an invitation of his own — to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president, who flew to Kabul and delivered a fiery anti-American speech inside Afghanistan's presidential palace.

"Karzai was enraged," said an Afghan with knowledge of the events, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the delicacy of the issue. "He invited Ahmadinejad to spite the Americans."

The dispute was smoothed over only this week, when Mr. Obama flew to Kabul for a surprise dinner with Mr. Karzai. White House officials emphasized that the most important purpose of Mr. Obama's trip to Afghanistan was to visit Ameri-

Continued on Page A10

#### Criticism After Iraq Vote

In an interview, Ayad Allawi rejected charges that he won Iraq's national elections by appealing to Baathists. Page A4.

## Female Suicide Bombers Strike at Moscow Subway



IGOR BABAYUNOV/ASSOCIATED PRESS

A commuter wounded in the bombing at the Park Kultury subway station in Moscow, shortly after the blast on Monday morning.

## State Debt Woes Grow Too Big to Camouflage

By MARY WILLIAMS WALSH

California, New York and other states are showing many of the same signs of debt overload that recently took Greece to the brink — budgets that will not balance, accounting that masks debt, the use of derivatives to plug holes, and armies of retired public workers who are counting on benefits that are proving harder and harder to pay.

And states are responding in sometimes desperate ways, raising concerns that they, too, could face a debt crisis.

### PAYBACK TIME Uncharted Liabilities

New Hampshire was recently ordered by its State Supreme Court to put back \$110 million that it took from a medical malpractice insurance pool to balance its budget. Colorado tried, so far unsuccessfully, to grab a \$500 million surplus from Pinnacle Assurance, a state workers' compensation insurer that was privatized in 2002. It wanted the money for its university system and seems likely to get a lesser

amount, perhaps \$200 million.

Connecticut has tried to issue its own accounting rules. Hawaii has inaugurated a four-day school week. California accelerated its corporate income tax this year, making companies pay 70 percent of their 2010 taxes by June 15. And many states have balanced their budgets with federal health care dollars that Congress has not yet appropriated.

Some economists fear the states have a potentially bigger problem than their recession-induced budget woes. If investors become reluctant to buy the

Continued on Page A3

## 38 Killed, Raising New Challenge for Putin

By CLIFFORD J. LEVY

MOSCOW — Brazen suicide bombings in the center of Moscow on Monday confronted Prime Minister Vladimir V. Putin with a grave challenge to his record of curbing terrorism, and raised the possibility that he would respond as he had in the past, by significantly tightening control over the government.

The explosions, set off by five male suicide bombers in two landmark subway stations, killed at least 38 people and wounded scores of others, touching off fears that the Muslim insurgency in southern Russia, including Chechnya, was once again being brought to the country's heart.

The attacks during the morning rush hour seemed all but designed to taunt the security services, which have been championed by Mr. Putin in the decade since he took power in Russia. The first one occurred at Lubyanka subway station, near the headquarters of the Federal Security Service, also known as the F.S.B., the successor agency to the Soviet-era K.G.B. It was led by Mr. Putin in the 1990s.

Mr. Putin, the former presi-

## Consensus on Climate Change Ends at the TV Weather Desk

By LESLIE KAUFMAN

The debate over global warming has created predictable adversaries, pitting environmentalists against industry and coal-state Democrats against coastal liberals.

But it has also created tensions between two groups that might be expected to agree on the issue: climate scientists and meteorologists, especially those who

posted recently on AccuWeather's Web site.

Such skepticism appears to be widespread among TV forecasters, about half of whom have a degree in meteorology. A study released on Monday by researchers at George Mason University and the University of Texas at Austin found that only about half of the 571 television weathercast-







# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

# DAILY NEWS

## No station agents at site of fatal knifings

BY BARRY PADDOCK and PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

MTA BUDGET CUTS may have robbed cops of a good description of the subway killer.

The slasher and a group of other young men fleeing the Christopher St. station came within inches of a token booth that was shuttered last September.

The only way out of the southbound side of the station is through a small bank of turnstiles directly in front of the booth, R126.

Yesterday, a police flyer seeking witnesses was taped to the glass.

"Somebody could have seen them and called, but no — nobody was there," said Niqua Woods, who was on the No. 2 train when three of her friends were stabbed, two fatally.

"If there were people there, they could have caught them that night and we wouldn't be going through this."

The brawl between two groups on the No. 2 train briefly spilled onto the Christopher St. platform, according to the dead men's friends. If a clerk were at the post, he or she "would have seen everything," Maurice Jenkins, a transit union vice president said.

He said clerks are trained to give good descriptions to police.

While one group fled at Christopher St., the other group rode the train one stop to Houston St. — which also has a shuttered booth on the southbound side because of budget cuts.

NYC Transit spokeswoman Deirdre Parker said more than 100 booths were closed last year and more will be shuttered to help close budget gaps. Both Christopher and Houston Sts. have booths staffed at all times on the uptown side and intercoms for riders to seek assistance, Parker said. [pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)

# FEWER EYES PROTECT MAJOR CITY TARGETS

## MTA cuts weekend surveillance at vulnerable sites Verrazano Bridge, Queens-Midtown Tunnel

**EXCLUSIVE**  
BY ROCCO PARASCANDOLA  
DAILY NEWS POLICE BUREAU CHIEF



Aerial view of Manhattan-bound entrance of Queens-Midtown Tunnel, which is not manned by security on weekends. Photo by Andrew Theodorakis/Daily News

IT'S EYES wide shut at two of the city's main bridges and tunnels.

The MTA has removed weekend security details from the Queens-Midtown Tunnel and the Verrazano Bridge, the Daily News learned yesterday, just as the Moscow bombers sent New York into a new round of terror jitters.

No longer do MTA Bridges and Tunnels cops man booths at the tunnel exit or on the bridge's two tower anchorages on Saturdays and Sundays.

Instead, the MTA says it has a high-tech surveillance system of cameras and monitors.

Security sources familiar with the bridge and tunnel say that is a mistake.

"What if a terrorist wants to do something?" said one source. "People walk in all the time — drunk, lost, homeless, cars going the wrong way," the source said of the tunnel's unguarded exit.

"God forbid someone walks in and wants to plant a bomb."

There are still many cops at the toll plaza in Queens, but with no plaza in Manhattan, the tube carrying motorists from Queens has been unguarded since the summer, sources told The News.

That also leaves vulnerable the tunnel's ventilation building, which circulates fresh air into the tubes and must remain unlocked at all times so commuters can escape in an emergency.

The Manhattan building can be accessed by walking down toward the tube, or by someone who stops their vehicle in the tunnel and uses the catwalk.

"Whatever is in a dirty bomb would be easy to spread," a second source said. "If we have someone there we could get there quicker than whoever they're going to send if they see it on video."

At the Verrazano, mean-

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

while, the MTA a month ago eliminated weekend posts at the anchorages on both the Brooklyn and Staten Island sides.

A blow to the bridge would cripple city commerce, as some 9,000 trucks use the Verrazano each day, second only to the 15,000 that drive over the George Washington Bridge, a third security source said.

The MTA disputed the notion that cutbacks have diminished security.

"[Bridges and Tunnels] has a fully-integrated electronic security system at select locations," MTA spokeswoman Judie Glave said. "That system is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by our operations personnel and a response plan is in place."

Union officials disagree. "The world has changed," said Joseph Mauro, president of the Bridge and Tunnel Officers Benevolent Association. "It's irresponsible to do anything to compromise security."

And while there have been no  
**(Continued on reverse)**

major incidents since the cutbacks, the changes may have cost one stricken motorist his life.

Thompson Suh, 68, had a heart attack and crashed into a wall as he emerged from the Manhattan-bound Midtown Tunnel the afternoon of Feb. 27.

An ambulance wound up in Queens and had to make a U-turn back into Manhattan because there was no officer to guide the EMS crew or stop traffic so it could get to Suh, sources told The News.

Suh's family declined to comment.

**With Henrick Karoliszyn**  
*rparascandola@nydailynews.com*



**BOOKS**  
**WHAT'S EATING**  
**BROOKLYN?** (page 15)

**WELLBEING:**  
**WE'RE BRINGING**  
**BIKRAM BACK** (page 10)

**STYLE**  
**OUT OF AFRICA, INTO**  
**OUR CLOSETS** (page 14)



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# Moscow blasts felt in New York

Police ramp up presence in subways Attacks raise concern for state of local transit security Safer since 9/11, but experts see weaknesses (page 02)

**News**

## Poll says: Tax rich, but not me

Americans see no problem letting wealthy carry a heavier load They just don't want to see own burden grow (page 06)

## Russians vow bomb payback

Russia's President Medvedev promises to seek out terrorists, bring them to justice (page 05)



## Not too late to rescue Rangers

Struggling team still has a shot at the playoffs (page 21)

**textpoll WIN \$250**

Have the Russian bombings made you feel less safe when riding public transportation?

A: Yes B: No

Texting your answer, A or B, to **89800** enters you for a chance to win a \$250 Visa gift card.

See our Voices page for poll results and terms and conditions

1

In the news

## Cabbie stopped meds

A former cab driver who suffers from epilepsy admitted he stopped his anti-seizure medication and passed out before running down Pace University student Danjelle Rico in June 2006. Hassan Afzal, 25, pleaded guilty to criminally negligent homicide and is likely to serve five years probation. **● METRO**

In the news

Houston Street Station

DO NOT CROSS

## Cops seek train killer

Police yesterday collected surveillance video from West Village subway stations and nearby stores in their search for suspects in the stabbing death of two men on a downtown 2 train early Sunday. Two friends from Brooklyn, Darnell Morel and Ricardo Williams, both 24, were killed after a dispute on the train. **● METRO**

## Albany's priorities: Vacation, then budget

**NEW YORK.** Albany legislators began their weeklong break for Passover and Easter yesterday, all but guaranteeing that the budget to overcome New York's \$9 billion deficit will be finished later than the April 1 deadline when the state's fiscal year starts. Before leaving, legislators approved emergency spending measures to keep the state functioning. **● METRO**

## Teen killed by train at 116th St.

**NEW YORK.** An 18-year-old man was struck and killed by a 1 train at 116th Street station near Columbia University yesterday. The incident, which occurred at 10:40 a.m. was under investigation, although no criminality was suspected. Police did not identify the victim pending notification of his family. **● METRO**



▶ The video shows four men beating one man.

## Violence at Penn goes viral

**NEW YORK.** A YouTube video of a brutal four-against-one fight outside Penn Station has become a disturbing hit with over 20,000 views. The fight begins with one man hitting another with a stick. As the victim retaliates he is jumped by four men who punch and kick him. The fight took place March 27, according to the video's title. **● METRO**

# Russia bombings put NYC on alert

▶ Police doubled underground, as experts and riders wonder what more can be done ▶ Electronic surveillance lags behind schedule in subways



▶ "What we try to do is lessen that nervousness that people have," Police Commissioner Ray Kelly said on CNN, noting there have been 10 plots against the city since the 9/11 attacks.

Reverberations from the Moscow subway bombings were felt in New York yesterday as police beefed up security and riders' groups used the attacks as ammunition in the fight to keep the MTA from axing up to 450 station agents in May.

A booth agent may not stop a suicide bomber, "but removing someone who can broadcast a suspicious person's description to the police seems like a bad idea," said MTA board member Andrew Albert.

Police presence was doubled after the 38 deaths in Moscow, but subways present a challenge. "It was built to be porous, to move

### What's worked?

- ▶ NYPD doubled uniformed presence in the subway yesterday. Plainclothes cops throughout the system.
- ▶ 37 "Omega booths" staffed by NYPD installed after 2005 London subway bombings at points where tunnels cross under rivers.
- ▶ Hardening underwater tunnels: The MTA uses a special coating that makes it more difficult for the tunnel to collapse.

### What hasn't?

- ▶ Half of 4,300 cameras are working. The rest are under construction, according to the MTA.
- ▶ Electronic surveillance on LIRR and at bridges and tunnels. But the MTA is overbudget and late getting motion detectors and cameras into the subway.
- ▶ Emergency intercoms are difficult to find and awkward to use, MTA officials have admitted.

the largest number of people," said Gene Russianoff of the Straphangers Campaign. "It doesn't lend itself

to security."

Commuters were thankful for extra police but some said they didn't

know what other measures could be taken.

"I don't think there's anything the MTA can do," said rider Shawn Wills 35. "If it's going to happen, it's going to happen."

The cash-strapped MTA came under fire in January for scaling back its plan to blanket the system with cameras and motion sensors. MTA spokesman Kevin Ortiz said the way was safer "than it ever been, even as we gradually reduced the number of station agents

Read more on page 10

**CARLY BALDWIN**  
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▶ The scene of the collapse in Williamsburg.

## Building collapse

**NEW YORK.** Four construction workers were injured, one seriously, when the building they were working on in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, collapsed yesterday.

Dept. of Buildings Commissioner Robert LiMandri said a structural component was likely removed

leading to the fall of brick structure at 36 Coney Island Ave. near the Lorain Street stop on the L train. Workers were adding fourth floor while engaged in a gut renovation.

"We will be issuing citations," said DOB spokesman Tony Scalfani. **● METRO**

latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-georgia-bus1-2010apr01,0,3408048.story

**latimes.com**

## Clayton County loses vital bus service, link to Atlanta

**Many workers fear they'll lose their jobs without the transportation, cut off because of a county budget shortfall.**

By Richard Fausset

April 1, 2010

Reporting from Jonesboro, Ga.

The Great Recession has yet to claim J.C. Butler's warehouse job on the north side of metro Atlanta.

But now it has eradicated his means of getting there.

Butler, 57, lives in Clayton County, a majority-black, working-class suburb on Atlanta's south flank that killed off its local bus system Wednesday over concerns about a \$19-million countywide budget shortfall.

The demise of the buses, which provided 2.1 million rides last year, is among the most dramatic of the scores of public transit cutbacks enacted across the U.S. in recent months as agencies adjust to plummeting government revenue.

Wednesday morning, Butler rode for the last time on the 503 bus as it snaked through the pre-dawn darkness, past cul-de-sac streets named for English kings and tropical ports of call. At each stop it took on auto repair and airport workers, community college students and janitors.

Butler slumped by a window seat, scowling.

"I don't know what I'm going to do," he said, adding, "So many people here, they're going to be sure enough messed up. We need this bus bad."

They are not alone. For ecological, economic and practical reasons, commuters nationwide remain hungry for public transit.

Since 1995, public transportation use is up 31%, more than twice the U.S. population growth rate, according to the American Public Transportation Assn., the nonprofit that represents the nation's commuter systems. Last year, Americans took 10.2 billion public transit trips.





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FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2010

## Decry Station Agent Layoffs

# Warn Sinking MTA: Don't Cast Off 'Life-Preservers'

By ARI PAUL

Maurice Jenkins, the vice president of the Stations Division of Transport Workers Union Local 100, asked all the Station Agents in the room to rise to their feet. Nearly a dozen members stood among those in the public gallery during the Metropolitan

Transportation Authority board meeting March 24, when the body voted to move forward with service cuts that include the laying off of more than 450 Station Agents.

Mr. Jenkins asked those who had either saved a passenger's life or participated in saving a life to raise their hands. Nearly all of them had.

### 'Act Like a New Yorker'

"Look at these people," Mr. Jenkins said to MTA Chairman and CEO Jay Walder. "They represent this city. They're as diverse as any culture that occupies this city. You came here from London. You call yourself a New Yorker. I think you need to act like a New Yorker."

Several of the station workers spoke passionately during the public

comment period of the meeting, repeating the motto that they are the "eyes and ears" of the system who augment the transit police force, report emergencies and attend to riders needing directions. "Station Agents wear many hats. I'm a Station Agent of 28 years. This is my hat," Mr. Jenkins said removing his round head piece. "But the ultimate hat that we wear is a halo."

Others spoke of the hardships that they would endure if they lost their jobs. One, Sharon Allen, pleaded with Mr. Walder to adopt a City Council proposal, backed by Local 100, that would use 10 percent of Federal stimulus funding for operational needs rather than it all going into the capital budget.

"Why are you just holding it? Is it collecting interest?" she asked.

Ms. Allen then surveyed the MTA board members, claiming that as well-compensated individuals, many of whom don't rely on public transit, they would not be able to understand working people's plight.

"Oh my God, these people cannot relate to me," she said.

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER  
THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

Another Station Agent with disabled children said that if she was laid off the loss of income would compound the fact that her children would feel the pain of the MTA's cuts to paratransit.

### Where Does It Stop?

"How much is one family supposed to suffer?" she asked.

The layoffs are bad news not just for the workers who will be handed pink slips. Local 100 officials are well aware that the MTA seeks to either further reduce the workforce or ask for major union concessions, as even with the service and job cuts (nearly 500 administrative and managerial jobs are set to be cut through buy-outs, early retirement packages and layoffs), the agency will be faced with another \$400-million deficit, Mr. Walder told the board.

"That is one heck of a hill we still have to climb," said Mr. Walder, who has vowed to eliminate what he has called "archaic work rules."

The agency is also pushing Local 100 to reconsider One-Person Train Operation, which would eliminate the Conductor title, a move Local 100 President John Samuelson has rejected.

MTA Vice Chairman Andrew Saul drew angry calls from workers for his comments before the vote last week, when he blamed the recently arbitrated contract with Local 100 for a \$600-million drain on the agency due to two

4-percent wage increases it gives to transit workers. Board member Nancy Shevell, a freight transport executive best known for being the girlfriend of Paul McCartney, echoed the sentiment, saying that unions would

have to agree to less overtime pay and sick time as well as reformed work rules in order to realize enough savings to avoid future layoffs.

"The burden shouldn't just lie with the public, many who are working-class and poor, and the Station Agents and administrative workers who will lose their job," she said. "The labor force must be part of the solution."

Her comments were cut short by boos and heckling, with one union member saying, "Get Paul McCartney to pay for it."

### Calls Legislators Duplicitous

Two board members voted against implementing the plan. Allen Cappelli, in his comments before the vote, said he was outraged at State Senators who put the blame for the cuts on the MTA's



The Chief-Leader/Michel Friang

**'WE ARE THE FRONT LINES':** Christine Williams, the recording secretary of the Stations Division of Transport Workers Union Local 100, told the Metropolitan Transportation Authority board last week that laying off 500 Station Agents while news reports showed that many cameras in subway stations were not functioning would lead to more crime in the system.

# The Chief

Civil Service LEADER

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY



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April 2, 2011

## Savings Over Safety

An alarming increase in the city's murder rate during the first quarter of the year and the fatal stabbing of two men during a dispute on a subway train in Manhattan this past weekend raise questions about planned reductions in the police force effective July 1 and the layoff of 450 Station Agents a month earlier.

An NYPD spokesman last week tried to minimize concerns about the spike in murders by noting that while they were up compared to the same period in 2009, they were still below the levels for the preceding years. True enough. But it may also be an indication that the continued reduction in the number of police officers during the Bloomberg administration—down more than 6,000 since the last year of Rudy Giuliani's tenure—has reached a tipping point. As good a manager as Police Commissioner Ray Kelly is, he himself has acknowledged that there may come a time when the best efforts of the NYPD and its officers won't be enough to keep crime declining without an adequate patrol force.

Subway crime has also declined for close to two decades. It nonetheless is noticeable that uniformed transit cops are not a common sight even late at night, leading to the assumption that their numbers have been reduced to address other priorities.

The loss of Station Agents from subway platforms also increases the likelihood of criminals being emboldened. The agents serve as underground eyes and ears for the transit system, can discourage the fare-beating which is costing it dearly, and can swiftly alert police if they observe more-serious crimes in progress. At a time when the Metropolitan Transportation Authority is reducing subway service, it can ill afford a surge in crime that winds up costing it ridership.

## East River Tolls Resurface

Mr. Walder has stood firm against the Council plan to use capital money to help fill the operational budget gap, saying that it would result in the deterioration of the system. Mr. Albert offered several plans to the board, including adding tolls to East River bridges and tunnels, an idea recently reintroduced by State Senate Majority Leader Pedro Espada, who, in an ironic twist, was one of a handful of Senators who helped kill that provision in last year's bailout package for the MTA.

Mr. Seabrook, who had also previously asked the board to lobby for a gas tax to supplement the MTA's revenues, said that expensive capital projects should be put on hold or scrapped in order to avert operational cuts. He singled out the Second Ave. Subway project, noting that cost estimates kept spiraling for completion of the construction between 92nd St. and 97th St.

"There's no end in sight to build the Second Ave. Subway," he said. "It's never going to be completed."

"mismanagement," even though the State Legislature has not moved to enact new funding streams for the agency (Mr. Walder also blamed the state for cutting \$143 million in funding for the agency this year).

Correction Officers Benevolent Association President Norman Seabrook, the labor-designated member of the MTA board, said that the service reductions would adversely change the city's character, seconding the argument from non-voting board member Andrew Albert that fewer transit options would result in decreased revenues for the entertainment industry as well as impeding job growth in the area.

"People don't come from overseas and come to Pennsylvania," Mr. Seabrook said. "They come to New York City because it's a city that never sleeps. It's 24 hours a day, it's seven days a week. We're changing that motto. I think we need to back off of all these service cuts and everything else and layoffs until we've looked under every rock. And we haven't looked under every rock."



The Chief-Leader/Michel Friang

**PUTTING UNIONS ON THE SPOT:** Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman and CEO Jay Walder said the transit unions should consider making work-rule concessions in order to realize savings so as to avoid future layoffs that might be proposed later this year. Mr. Walder said that even with the service cuts enacted last week, the agency still faces a \$400-million deficit.



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# The MTA giveth and the MTA taketh away

68 stations will lose their agents, including newly redone 96th Street

With much fanfare, the authority opened the new entrance to the 96th Street subway stop yesterday. But at the same time the MTA is quietly planning on reducing staffing at 96th Street. Starting as soon as next month, agents at the 94th Street booth will be reduced to part-time hours only, leaving just one 24-hour staffed booth at the busy transfer station.

It's one of 68 stations losing station agents May 7, according to the Transport Workers Union.

"It's very dangerous. You have nobody else here," said Chris Grimm, 46, who regularly uses 96th Street. "Not having the agents, crime will grow. It's a bad idea."

The station agent cuts are compounded by the fact that half the cameras in the subway system don't work. Even when more cameras are added, only about one in four stations will have cameras at turnstiles.

"We need that human presence the token booth clerks provide for straphangers," said Public Advocate Bill de Blasio yesterday. "There is no way our subways are going to be safe without it."

Some 450 station agents will be laid off in May, according to the MTA. Stations will have at least one token booth after the cuts.



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EMILY ANNE EPSTEIN/METRO

The MTA will add more surveillance cameras to the station but not until September.

## All shiny and new

Riders marveled at the new 96th Street station house, which opened to the public just before noon yesterday. The airy above-ground station

house is similar to 72nd Street's station and straphangers no longer must trek down two flights of stairs to get to platforms. Two elevators will be built to make it ADA-compliant. The station is to be completed in September.

**"We need a new commitment from the state and the MTA to fix all broken cameras ... and preserve 450 station agents in this year's budget."**

**BILL DE BLASIO**

(Continued on reverse)



**Losing agents**

Stations where agents hours will be reduced or cut entirely on May 7.

Station	Line	Station	Line	Station	Line
145 St	A	59 St	4	Hoyt St	3
149 St 3 Ave	2	86 St	4	Grand St	L
49 St	N	Union St	R	Roosevelt Ave	E
50 St	C	Prospect Ave	R	Jamaica	
42 St	A	25 St	R	CTR-Parsons	E
34 St Penn Sta	1	161 St	D	Jay St	A
50 St	1	96 St	1	66 St	1
Canal St	J	168 St	1	72 St	1
1 Ave	L	174 St	2	79 St	1
23 St	6	E 149 St	6	86 St	1
28 St	6	34 St	R	Lex Ave	N
33 St	6	116 St	C	23 St	N
Grand Central	7	81 St	C	14 St/Union Sq	R
77 St	6	42 St	A	Prince St	N
181 St	A	34 St	A	Fulton St	5
116 St	3	47-50 St	F	Grand Central	S
125 St	3	34 St	F	110 St	6
135 St	3	14 St	1	116 St	6
W 4 St	A	23 St	1	Marcy Ave	J
23 St	F	34 St Penn Sta	1	High St	A
8 St	N	42 St Times Sq	1	Clinton-	
Astor Pl	6	Nostrand Ave	A	Washington	C
51 St	6	Kings Ave	B	Nostrand Ave	A
		Stillwell Ave	D		

SOURCE: TWU



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## Station Agents Gain Temporary Reprieve in Struggle Against Transit Cuts

By Steve Wishnia  
May 7, 2010 | Posted in [IndyBlog](#) | [Email this article](#)

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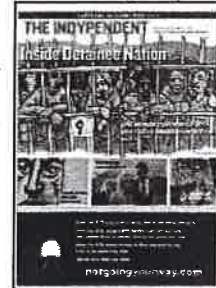
Thanks for the icons

Imperiled subway-station agents won a reprieve from massive layoffs late Wednesday night, but their jobs are still in danger.

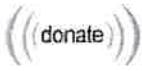
State Supreme Court Justice Alice Schlesinger issued a temporary restraining order barring the Metropolitan Transportation Authority from laying off 487 agents until a court hearing on Monday afternoon, May 10. The layoffs, scheduled for Friday, would have eliminated more than one-sixth of the system's station agents.

The Transit Workers Union is arguing that the MTA, which ordained the layoffs 18 months ago, did not give the public enough time to comment on them, says TWU spokesperson Alan Saly. The union also contends that station agents serve a vital security purpose, and that the March suicide bombings in Moscow subways and last month's conviction of an al-Qaeda plotter against New York's system constitute new evidence of this need. Agents call in more than 400 emergencies a day, Saly adds, from sick passengers to lost children to suspicious packages.

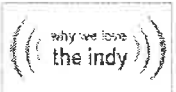
Station agents are "the first level of security in the transit system," says TWU director of organizing Charles Jenkins. The MTA, he explains, has been trying to eliminate them in favor of since the MetroCard was introduced more than 10 years ago, but "since that plan was implemented, there was 9/11. They should go down to Cortlandt Street and be reminded of why that station is still closed."



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Transit workers picketed outside of MTA Chairman Jay Walder's apartment on Thursday afternoon. PHOTO: STEVE WISHNIA.

Jenkins was among about 60 TWU members who picketed Thursday afternoon outside the home of MTA director Jay Walder, in a luxury high-rise in Tribeca. Some came straight from work, in their MTA uniform caps. Others wore Rastafarian tams and Yankees caps, Sikh turbans and union bandannas. They sang "we are the union/ Mike Quill's union" and chanted "How do we kick the boss's ass? Mobilize the working class."

"Don't get comfortable," TWU political director Marvin Holland warned them. The restraining order, Jenkins emphasized, is "temporary."

The workers were well aware of that. If the layoffs go through, they will wipe out the jobs of all agents with less than six years' experience. And the MTA, trying to shrink a \$378 million deficit, also plans to cut 750 bus drivers.

"This is not a joke," says Navinder Singh, 46, who works in the Fifth Avenue/53rd Street station. "They're playing with our lives."

Singh, an immigrant from India, has worked for the MTA for two years, so he is one of the agents facing a layoff. Ironically, he quit a job at a jewelry company after 14 years because he thought a government job would be secure. He bought a house in Queens immediately after he was confirmed as a permanent worker. He has a \$1,300-a-month mortgage payment.

"This guy's making \$350,000 a year," he says of Walder. "We are labor-class. We live hand to mouth. They always attack the poor people."

"I have no idea what I'm going to do," says Sabrina Greenwood, 38, a station agent from the Bronx with five years on the job. She is an "A.M. extra," going to different stations to fill in for agents who were out sick or on vacation. She has four children, with the oldest one in college.

"We are the deterrent from crime," she says. A camera can only tell you what happens after the fact. A machine can't do what a human presence can."

# Disabled stranded in latest MTA cuts

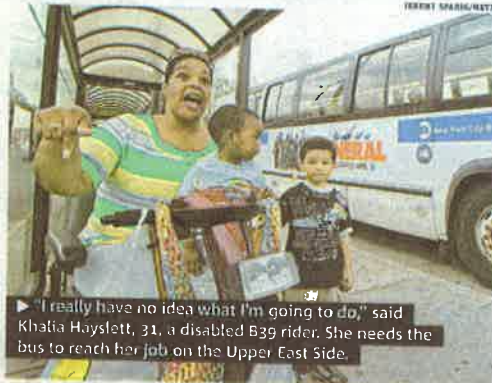
Without buses, some find no way to enter Manhattan Alternative is troubled Access-A-Ride, which is facing \$80 million in budget reductions

All New Yorkers will feel the pain of bus and subway cuts this summer, but some handicapped riders say they are truly left stranded.

Buses are the only fully ADA-accessible form of mass transit in the city and, starting at the end of June, the MTA plans to eliminate or shorten dozens of routes.

Riders can turn to Access-A-Ride, except the paratransit service itself will be trimmed by about \$80 million worth of service reductions, too. And forget the subways. Only 70 of 468 stations have elevators.

"They just didn't think too much about us," said Brooklyn resident Mildred Escobar. Escobar, 40, has cerebral palsy and uses a



"I really have no idea what I'm going to do," said Khatia Hayslett, 31, a disabled B39 rider. She needs the bus to reach her job on the Upper East Side.

wheelchair, she needs the B39 bus to get to her job in Manhattan every day. But the B39 will be axed at the end of June. She can use an

elevator at the Marcy Avenue J. M. Z stop but none of the lines' stops in Manhattan have elevators.

"I'm going to ask my job

## Access-A-Ride

Even before cuts to Access-A-Ride, the service was slow and unreliable, say riders. At Union Square, for example, Jaqueline Wilmott waited in the hot sun yesterday in her wheelchair for an Access-A-Ride van to pick her up at 11 a.m. It didn't come until 3 p.m.

to transfer me to our Brooklyn office," she said.

"We can't get into Manhattan," said Anthony Trocchia, 40, who also uses the B39. "How can you not feel like a second-class citizen?"

**CARLY BALDWIN**  
carly.baldwin@metro.us



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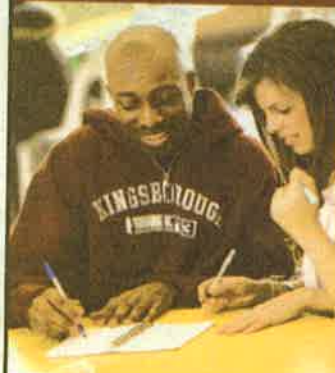
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Spitzer  
Spitzer opens door to political return

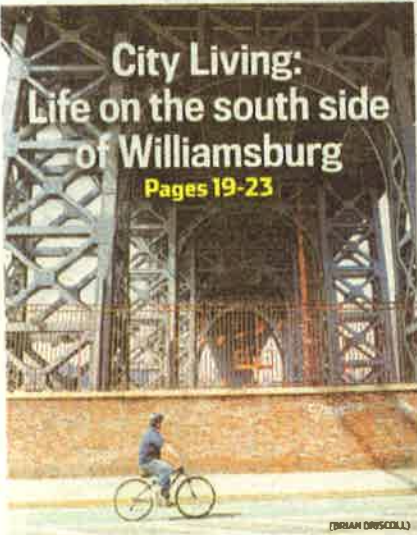
NEW YORK. Disgraced former Gov. Eliot Spitzer for the first time admitted in an interview with Fortune magazine that he's considered a political comeback.

"I've never said I would never consider running for office again," Spitzer said in the interview, posted online last night. Spitzer served 18 months as governor before resigning after admitting paying for sex with prostitute Ashley Dupre. METRO



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# am NEW YORK



City Living:  
Life on the south side  
of Williamsburg  
Pages 19-23

(BRIAN DRISCOLL)

Spitzer dreaming  
of return to public office  
Page 4

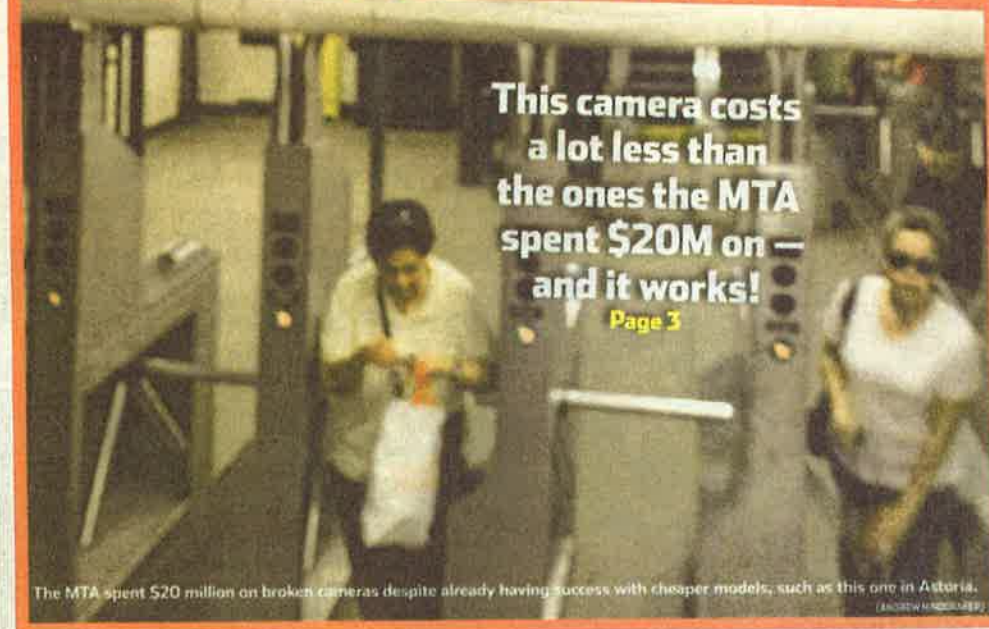


'Hot Chef'  
has taste  
for greatness  
Page 18

Scott Conant (JOHN THARLOW)



# CHEAP SHOTS



This camera costs  
a lot less than  
the ones the MTA  
spent \$20M on —  
and it works!  
Page 3

The MTA spent \$20 million on broken cameras despite already having success with cheaper models, such as this one in Astoria. (ANDREW HANDBLBERG)



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# A camera quandary

MTA's older and cheaper cams work better

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

While hundreds of high-tech cameras that cost the MTA \$80 million are broken, cheaper models installed a few years back are doing their job pretty well, amNewYork has learned.

The simpler cameras, costing roughly half as much as the ones that were contracted out, took about six months to install and have been used by police dozens of times to catch bank robbers and other criminals, elected officials said.

"It's a no-brainer," said Assemb. Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria), who secured

\$288,000 for cameras at the Astoria-Ditmars Boulevard station on the N line.

In 2006, the MTA signed a \$80 million contract to install 900 high-tech cameras in 32 stations, including 14 in Manhattan. Those cameras were supposed to start rolling in 2008, but a key contractor went belly-up that year, delaying the project, MTA spokesman Kevin Ortiz confirmed.

"Since that time, the MTA ... has continued to work to get the cameras online and all the locations will be fully operational by June of this year," said Ortiz, who did not elaborate on why the MTA chose that system.

But the simpler system designed and maintained in-house has been nabbing criminals for years.

In 2005, Assemb. Dov Hikind (D-Brooklyn) allocated \$1.2 million to put 120 cameras in nine stations on the D, R and N lines. The system features \$400 Panasonic cameras throughout the

Cams in the system

4,313

cameras are in the stations.

1,100

suffer from network problems.

900

can't record.

Of the remaining 2,313 that work:

- Several hundred cover 54 stations at entrances and turnstiles.

- 130 are located throughout 10 stations in Astoria and Brooklyn.

SOURCE: MTA, TWU

station, capturing more angles than the other MTA devices, which point at entrances and turnstiles, union officials said. The recording devices cost about \$15,000 per station.

"The cameras work well and saved the MTA lots of money by doing the work in-house," said Pete Foley, a union official.

Workers pull the footage at least weekly, and several years ago the video helped nab a Brooklyn robber who menaced riders and slashed a woman on her wrist, union officials said.

"By this time, I thought the entire system would be wired," Hikind said.

Subway safety has been in the spotlight after the MTA's decision to cut station agents, and the March 28 double sly that unfolded at the Christopher Street No. 1 station.

That station — like roughly 380 others — doesn't have a camera at the turnstiles.



Surveillance cameras, such as these at the Astoria-Ditmars Boulevard station, helped cops nab criminals more effectively than newer ones. (ANDREW HARRIS/AP)

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**Cameras That  
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**No Compassion for  
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# GREATER NEW YORK



## The Teardown Returns

Signature of Housing Boom Makes Comeback

PROPERTY A23



## Branson's Lessons

HEARD & SCENE A28

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Friday, May 7, 2010 A19

# Mayor Proposes Steep Cuts in Budget

BY SAUL LOEB

A \$2.9 billion budget proposal by Mayor Michael Bloomberg proposed Thursday cuts to libraries, firehouses, pools, firehouses, cut thousands of jobs and reduce a citywide. Starting July 1, the budget would cut roughly \$87 million in higher fees, such as parking-meter rates. The city also plans to head count by employees, about

3.7% of the total work force, with more than 6,000 coming from layoffs and nearly 5,000 from attrition. There will be no layoffs at the city's uniformed agencies.

Mr. Bloomberg blamed the city's financial predicament squarely on the shoulders of Albany leaders, accusing them of "starving" the city with deep cuts they've made in funding.

"I will remind everybody who, unfortunately, may lose their jobs that it is because of Albany's fiscal irresponsibility," he said.

Even before the mayor had finished speaking, Gov. David Paterson's budget director, Robert

Megna, fired off a blistering response, accusing the city of using "selective accounting" and questioning whether proposed cuts were necessary.

"The mayor's budget uses the state as a scapegoat to shirk responsibility for their own budget choices," Mr. Megna said.

The city and state traditionally joust over the budget, but this is the first time in several years that city leaders might have to approve a budget before Albany, which faces a \$9 billion deficit. The proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1 assumes Albany will cut funding to the city by \$1.3 billion. The

proposed city budget would be about 1% less than that of the current fiscal year.






Under the mayor's proposal, 20 firehouses are scheduled to be closed. This summer, four pools would be closed and the pool season cut by two weeks.

Hit hardest in the budget is

Please turn to page A21

- Budget throws the book at city libraries \_\_\_\_\_ A21
- Mayor's cash lessens the pain of hospital layoffs \_\_\_\_\_ A21
- Fire Department is hit, but the police are spared \_\_\_\_\_ A21
- Principals, parents worry about schools in the Bronx \_\_\_\_\_ A22

## Some Proposals to Eliminate Budget Gap

PROGRAM	GAP REDUCTION IN MILLIONS
 Libraries: Reduce subsidies to library systems	\$31.2
 Transportation: Increase Midtown parking rates from \$2 to \$2.50 per hour	\$12.2
 Fire: Eliminate fifth firefighter on 60 engine companies	\$7.9
 Aging: Close 50 senior centers, which together serve 1,600 seniors daily	\$4.2
 Parks: Close four pools and shorten outdoor pool season by two weeks	\$1.4

Source: Office of Management and Budget

## -Plot, rs Hit City

NER

oned truck shut Robert F. Kennedy for two hours. An ight was delayed an hour at Kennedy. A truck out an innocent nd the 4,5 and 6 had to stop for a package that turned another false alarm. appears to be going ere case of the Jit- botched bombing ure, police have 93 suspicious pack- ed with 381 in the last year.

.m. Wednesday, a n running from a U- rked on the RPK -squad officers de- ehicle explosion- id they are looking o allegedly stole the his father's U-Haul re could go meet his ey believe he aban- uck after seeing po- rching trucks head- city.

day around noon, Border Protection onto the tarmac at port and forced a ai back to the gate. e check revealed a t board had a name on the "no fly" list

## THE GRAND ANALYSIS: YANKEES VS. METS



## Next Stop for MTA: Dirtier, Shorter Trains

BY CHRIS HERRING

Hundreds of subway station agents who were to lose their jobs Thursday won a reprieve, even as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority said it plans more job cuts that could make trains dirtier and shorter.

The new cuts are projected cost 1,000 jobs and save more than \$115 million. While many of the layoffs will be administrative personnel and won't affect customers, some will. The authority said it will implement targeted cuts to maintenance, cleaning and customer service.

MTA spokesman Jeremy Sofin said the agency will "have at least some cuts that people will notice, from graffiti on the cars to having less subway cars on some of the trains. Our goal is for it to have a minimal impact, though."

Transport Workers Union spokesman Alan Saly said, "Our legal team is looking at any rights our workers might be entitled to regarding the cuts."

Earlier Thursday, a judge kept 475 subway clerks working until at least next week. State Supreme Court Justice Saliann Scarpulla kept in place a temporary restraining order issued by another judge late Wednesday. The workers' union argued that the MTA hadn't followed proper procedures—such as holding enough public hearings—before approving layoffs.

The job cuts appear inevita-

early next week.

The delay could be costly for the MTA, which had ordered the clerks to turn in their badges Thursday, but instead had to tell them to report to work as normal. The authority is racing to close a \$400 million budget hole by July. Without immediate agent layoffs that were projected to save \$21 million, though, the MTA could be forced to make service cuts or raise fares more quickly than planned.

The union celebrated the order, saying it was necessary to keep subway riders safe. "It's going to protect the New York City subway system, at least until we get a fair hearing in front of a judge next week," said John Samuelsen, the union president.

A spokesman for the MTA's New York City Transit declined comment on the substance of the ruling.

Outside the courtroom, the MTA faced tough questions over its plans in light of the car-bomb attempt in Times Square last weekend. At a public hearing, City Council members ripped the proposed layoffs. "Let's just be honest, less station agents will mean less security," said Peter Vallone, Jr., chairman of the Public Safety Committee.

MTA President Thomas Prendergast said "it is not unreasonable for the council to question how reducing the number of agents doesn't diminish security." But he said station agents aren't security guards and at one





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## Would Hit Bus Drivers Hardest TWU Calls 750 Layoffs A Bargaining Squeeze

By RICHARD STEIER

Transit workers, already bracing for the layoff of 500 Station Agents May 6, were dealt another blow April 29 when the Metropolitan Transportation Authority sent layoff notices to 750 other workers, with Bus Operators and Subway Car Inspectors slated to take the biggest hits.

MTA Chairman Jay H. Walder described the latest round of job losses as just another part of the painful reductions necessitated by an \$800-million deficit because of shortfalls in tax and rent collections. Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen, however, charged that Mr. Walder is using the layoffs to squeeze the union into giving up part of what it gained under a contract arbitration award last year.

### 'No Doubt That's the Case'

"I don't think there's any doubt that's the case," he said in a phone interview the following afternoon. He noted a recent op-ed article in which Mr. Walder stated that the union hadn't contributed its share toward relieving the MTA's deficit, and said that in private conversations the MTA leader "expressed his desire to get rid of our Conductors and achieve the [One-Person Train Operation] expansion that Toussaint agreed to before it got lost in the arbitration."

He was referring to discussions in which former Local 100 President Roger Toussaint expressed a willingness to permit the OPTO program to be utilized beyond the limited basis that was in effect on two less-traveled lines. That change was later taken off the table, and arbitrator John E. Zuccotti did not include it in his final award even after new MTA management pressed for it.

That arbitration began when Elliot Sander, who had been given a mandate by ex-Gov. Eliot Spitzer to improve relations with the union, was MTA CEO. Mr. Walder, who got his job



**JOHN SAMUELSEN:** 'Won't bow to MTA pressure.'

after the award was issued, has vociferously criticized its terms, saying that they were unaffordable and too generous given the general state of the economy, a view shared by Mayor Bloomberg. He initially appealed the award in court, but when it was upheld, agreed to pay the two 4-percent raises provided under its first two years while further appealing other aspects.

### Union Offered 'One-Time Fixes'

Mr. Samuelsen, while declining to discuss specifics, said he had offered senior MTA officials "one-time fixes that would get them through 2010 and give them the equivalent savings they would achieve with layoffs" using measures he said would not disturb key provisions of the union contract. He said those officials countered that they needed recurring savings rather than stop-gap measures but had not outright rejected his proposals.

He insisted the union would not cave in to Mr. Walder and reopen the contract award, adding, "I think he be-

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY



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Vol. CXIV, No. 8

May 7, 2010

lieves Local 100 will fold if he lays off enough union members."

MTA spokesman Jeremy Soffin dismissed Mr. Samuelsen's claim that the layoffs were a bit of collective-bargaining gamesmanship, citing the huge MTA deficit that had forced it into "cutting literally half the operating budget for 2010." That included a 20-percent budget cut at the MTA's headquarters, he said.

"It's a huge hole, and service cuts were part of that," Mr. Soffin said. "It's extremely difficult on the organization—there's pain at every level."

### Prime Layoff Areas

Slightly more than 600 of the layoffs that would take effect late next month affect the MTA's bus divisions, with Bus Operators accounting for about two-thirds of that cut. Smaller reductions will be made among Bus Maintainers, Helpers and Cleaners, Mr. Soffin said. Among the 122 subway layoffs planned, most of them will affect Car Inspectors.

Mr. Samuelsen remains unconvinced that these layoffs are necessary, implying that Mr. Walder was determined to make the union bend for political reasons. He cited as evidence Mr. Walder's unwillingness to use \$100 million in Federal stimulus funds to cover operating needs, which the MTA Chairman said would repeat mistakes made during the 1970s when capital funding was diverted to cover day-to-day expenses and the system's infrastructure was badly neglected as a result.

"The overall refusal of the MTA to use the \$100 million in stimulus money that's available," Mr. Samuelsen asserted, "indicates there's more in his mind than just eliminating the deficit."



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Letters to the Editor

## A Larger Issue for Unions

To the Editor:

I write in response to your editorial, "Klein's Imperfect Logic" (April 30 issue). Of course, I agree with your conclusion, that Teacher layoffs should be based on seniority. But I am troubled by part of your rationale. It seems to me a symptom of how unions—and supporters of the idea of unionism, such as *The Chief*—have ceded ground to our opponents.

You correctly write that the Bing-Diaz bill is flawed because Teachers would be subject to victimization, particularly those at higher rates of pay. I would add that many would have little chance of finding new employment at the DOE, since each Principal essentially now has an NBA-like "salary cap" that militates against hiring senior staff.

But you also suggest that the DOE proposal is simply no better at determining who is a good Teacher than the seniority system. That's dangerous ground; what if it was better, or claimed to be? As Mark Twain said, "There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." Soon enough the DOE will start to churn its data machine to "prove" that younger teachers teach to the test better, or teach 8th grade Earth Science better, or spin on their heads better. They'll send Post and Times reporters scurrying after this or that second-year Teach for America superstar. [Disclosure: I was hired as a Teaching Fellow, a program for which I personally am very grateful].

Moreover, I don't care if it's a "better" system. Here's a heretical thought: the actual purpose of unions is to improve workers' lives by challenging the free market: to win a higher than "market" wage, to make it hard for the employer to change working conditions or fire the higher-paid worker. We shouldn't hide these ideas under a rock like we're ashamed of them; just the opposite. When unions won the 8-hour day, or the weekend, or pension plans, unions defended the idea that working people's lives and rights were socially more important than employers' profits and rights. And we said that those victories would tend to spread, even into non-unionized sectors, and generally make people's lives better. And that was true, for decades.

Today we are playing this movie

backwards. As people in the non-union sector have faced big roll-backs in wages and benefits, we hear them complain that unionized workers should also "give back." It's an indication that we have, at least temporarily, lost the battle of ideas in this country, that we can't successfully explain to our fellow workers that it is in their interests too if we are able to hold the line somewhere, rather than engage in a frantic race to the bottom.

In some ways, we have been reminded in recent months that unregulated free markets can make a handful of people money at the expense of the larger society. In 12th-grade Economics class we have a term for this: Negative Externality. The classic example is the polluter who saves a few bucks by fouling the drinking water for the whole town. Goldman Sachs is a Negative Externality. And we should make the case that so are Joel Klein and Jonathan Bing. It's morally and ethically wrong to take away the jobs of people who have worked hard for decades simply because a cheaper body can be found. It is a spiritual pollution of the values that we should uphold. It is another step away from civilized behavior toward the idea that only might makes right. If we can make this case to the public we can win; otherwise, scratch and claw as we will, we will be fighting an ultimately losing battle.

Finally, I would just add that if the "for the students" mantra is successful, it will open up the door for attacks on every public union in the city that has some kind of seniority pay grade. I'm sure the city can "prove" that 23-year-old studs make better Sanitation Workers than 38-year-olds. Or that 42-year-old Firefighters have lost a step or two compared with their first-year brethren.

We all tend to fight our own battles and try to preserve our resources otherwise; my union, too. In the short run, this makes complete sense. We're all concerned about what we need in the next five minutes or the next three months or, at the longest in our own next contract round, even though

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Vol. CXIV, No. 8

May 7, 2010

we are all stuck in this pattern-bargaining contract system where wages are largely pre-ordained before the bargaining begins.

Management, whether private or Mayor Bloomberg, thinks hard about how its labor strategy will unfold over the next 10 or 20 years; if we could learn to do the same, we might have a brighter 2030. And that would be a really good thing.

**MARC KAGAN**  
UFT member

# 250 MTA CLERKS DERAILED

Despite a union suit, transit executives start layoffs to plug \$800M budget gap

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

HUNDREDS OF token booth clerks were laid off yesterday — essentially for the second time in a week.

The 250 clerks were hours from turning in their uniforms and badges last Thursday when NYC Transit was forced by a court order to slam on the brakes.

Over the weekend, transit officials issued another round of pink slips — and this time, a judge refused to intervene.

"It's like a yo-yo," said Laurenia Jarrett, 27, carrying a plastic garbage bag holding her uniforms into a NYC Transit building in Brooklyn.

Jarrett, who is seven months pregnant and has an 8-year-old daughter, is her family's sole breadwinner, she said. She plans to file for unemployment and look for work.

"It's a horrible situation to be in," she said. "I took this job for security, and that security is now gone."

The MTA was set last week to lay off 475 clerks and close 42 token booths. The union, however, filed a lawsuit alleging state law requires additional public hearings to shutter booths, and a judge issued a restraining order to stop the closures.

But over the weekend, transit officials decided that 250 employees were not needed to keep the booths open and

moved forward with those layoffs while the lawsuit proceeds.

Upkar Doad, 34, said clerks were feeling "a little psycho" from the emotional roller-coaster ride. He doesn't know how he'll continue to take care of his father, 70, and mother, 65, who are retired.

"I'm feeling nervous," he said. "I'm feeling worried."

Token booth clerks and Transport Workers Union Local 100 officials said they don't believe the MTA is in a financial crisis, pointing out the NYC Transit division has job postings for some six-figure management positions.

"For the last 16 years that I've worked here, the MTA has always cried poverty, and when all was said and done, they had a surplus," Local 100 Vice President Joe Bermudez said.

MTA executives have said the authority is attacking a deficit of nearly \$800 million, citing declining tax revenues and state funding cuts as major reasons. Even in bad times, however, large organizations still need to fill some positions, a spokesman said of the management job postings.

To balance its books, the MTA is eliminating nearly 3,000 positions in total from its various divisions.

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**EDITORIAL: Labor unions, it's time to save the transit system**

SEE PAGE 26



Laid-off transit worker Joanne Ares wipes tears outside the Gravesend, Brooklyn, facility where she had to turn in her uniform and badge yesterday. Photo by Todd Maisel/Daily News

## Deadlock, mistrial in immig slay

BY SCOTT SHIFREL and BILL HUTCHINSON  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

A MISTRIAL WAS DECLARED last night in the trial of a Brooklyn man accused of bashing an Ecuadorian immigrant to death while spewing hate.

The Brooklyn Supreme Court jury announced at 8:35 p.m. that they were hopelessly deadlocked, telling Justice Patricia DiMango they were one vote short of a unanimous verdict.

Jurors said 11 of them were in agreement that Keith Phoenix, 30, was guilty of second-degree murder but not guilty of the hate-crime charges.

The holdout juror wanted Phoenix to be convicted of manslaughter minus the hate-crime charges for the fatal 2008 beating of Jose Sucuzhanay.

"I can't see any other action but to declare a mistrial at this time," said DiMango, prompting several jurors to burst into tears.

DiMango dismissed the panel of seven women and five men and set June 15 for the start of Phoenix's new trial. He remains in custody without bail.

Juror Guy Danza said the holdout juror was ada-

mant in her belief that Phoenix did not intend to kill Sucuzhanay, 31, when he beat him with a baseball bat in Bushwick.

"We were very, very upset. We hated to go all this way and not have a verdict," Danza said. "Believe me, there was a lot of crying in that jury room, a lot of arguing. It was just one stubborn, selfish woman."

Another Supreme Court jury last week convicted Phoenix's pal, Hakim Scott, 26, of manslaughter, but acquitted him of hate-crime charges.

Sucuzhanay's tearful brother Romel, who was also attacked in the Dec. 7, 2008, incident, said he still believes Phoenix will be convicted.

"The evidence was there," Romel Sucuzhanay, 36, said. "I hope that we have success in the new trial."

The jury deliberated about 35 hours over four days before reaching an impasse.

Danza said no one on the panel accepted the prosecution's argument that the fatal beating was a hate crime. Romel Sucuzhanay testified he and his brother were walking home arm in arm when the suspects attacked them, yelling ethnic and homophobic slurs.

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## Drug tech passes the blame

BY WIL CRUZ,  
MELISSA GRACE  
and ROCCO PARASCANDOLA  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

AN NYPD LAB TECH suspended amid allegations she falsified drug test results is pointing fingers at a co-worker.

Mariem Megalla's lawyer claimed the evidence at the heart of the case was fine while it was in her custody. A questionable result popped up only after she handed it off to another lab tech, he says.

"It wasn't her responsibility," said the lawyer, Benjamin Lieberman. "It had nothing to do with her."

At least 800 drug cases are under review after allegations that Megalla marked a plastic bag as positive for cocaine even though it tested negative, sources said.

The citywide review will probably eventually involve more than 1,000 cases and is likely to lead to drugs being retested.

But sources said the review is likely to include a number of adjudicated cases for which the drugs have been destroyed — exposing the department to civil suits and the embarrassment of overturned verdicts.

Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly said falsified lab reports are not a widespread problem. But the allegations were serious enough for police brass to meet with representatives of the city's five district attorneys and the office of the special narcotics prosecutor.

Megalla, 57, joined the lab in 1986 and had no previous problems, Lieberman said.

With Brendan Brosh  
rcruz@nydailynews.com



IS THE TRANSIT UNION GOING TOO FAR? **AYES** B/NO  
Using your cell phone, text your vote, A or B, to amNY (2669)



# TOO CLOSE TO HOME

Furious transit union brings 'protest rat' to MTA chief's front door Page 3



Transit workers protest in front of MTA CEO Jay Walder's home in TriBeCa yesterday. (DANA WHELAN/INQUIRY)

# MTA chief's unwelcome guest

### Union plants big rat outside home to protest layoffs

BY HEATHER HADDON  
hhaddon@am-ny.com

TriBeCa is smelling a big fat rat. Members of the transit union have taken their ire over layoffs to the building where MTA CEO Jay Walder lives, picketing at his front door with a "union rat" balloon.

The rat is typically used in front of commercial buildings — and Walder's neighbors aren't amused with their unwanted guest.

"It's appalling," said Anne Libby, a 14-year resident who's against the station agent layoffs. "Home should be someone's refuge."

But getting people in the neighborhood riled up is what union leaders want.

**'This is no place to protest.'**

Anne Libby, TriBeCa resident

"He's made it personal against us; we want to make it personal against him," said Israel Rivera, Transport Workers Union Local 100 secretary treasurer.

The union is fuming over the MTA's decision to lay off 468 station agents across the system, along with 700 bus operators and other workers this summer. So the rat will be visiting for a while.

"He's taking an extremely con-



Union protesters use an inflatable rat to take their anger over cuts directly to Jay Walder's home. (DANA FORD/LEWIS)

#### RAT'S RAP SHEET

- Used in the city for at least 15 years.
- From six to 30 feet tall; can cost thousands of dollars.
- Inflates in minutes; deflates in seconds.
- Have been caught up in court cases, but they are still lawful to use.
- Appeared in the city's 2001 Labor Day parade.

frontational tone with the union. What does he expect?," said John Samuelson, TWU president.

On Monday, several dozen TWU members carted signs and the rat to Walder's 52-story apartment build-

ing, confusing residents. "Most people didn't know he lived here," said Jeanne Zingaro, a 14-year resident. "I'm all for free speech, but the only people they are bothering is the residents."

City unions have long plopped the inflatable rat outside of offending companies and construction sites, but it is rare to find the beady-eyed behemoth in front of someone's home, according to labor groups.

"I think [the rat] is effective. It stops people," said John Turchiano, a spokesman for the New York Hotel Trades Council, which owns several rats.

An MTA spokesman declined to comment.

## Transit's 'found' bounty

Think you left your guitar on the train? Act fast or someone else might be strumming it soon.

NYC Transit officials yesterday began tweeting about the hundreds of video games, bicycles and other stuff abandoned on city trains and buses that they're putting up for sale. Hot items include a Kindle and Bose headphones.



"All those iPods, cameras, jewelry and more is waiting for your BEST OFFER!" transit officials tweeted.

Transit has conducted the sales since 2004, once holding public auctions when the stuff hit critical mass, said agency spokesman Paul Fleuranges. This is the first year it is using Twitter to get out the word. The agency makes about \$25,000 a year in sales, Fleuranges said.

It's accepting bids, and on June 4 the highest offers will be selected.

The agency "makes every attempt" to contact the owner of the lost item, and puts the goods up for sale sometime between three months to a year after they have been left unclaimed, Fleuranges said.

To check out the goods, go to [mta.info/nyct/material/cursales.htm](http://mta.info/nyct/material/cursales.htm). (HEATHER HADDON)

# From Russia with money: Mogul gets OK to buy Nets

Russian's richest man now owns the NBA's poorest-performing team.

The league's board of governors yesterday approved the sale of the New Jersey Nets to billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov. The 45-year-old metals mogul will be the NBA's first non-North American owner.

"For those who are already fans of

the Nets and the NBA, I intend to give you plenty to cheer about," the Russian billionaire said.

The deal had been delayed until New York state could secure land in Brooklyn for the Nets' new arena. Prokhorov, estimated to be worth about \$13 billion, has



agreed to buy 80 percent of the Nets and 45 percent of the Barclays Center, which is part of the Atlantic Yards. The Nets hope Prokhorov's fortune will help them improve on their 12-70 season.



Prokhorov

Prokhorov already has proved he can build a winning basketball team, owning a share of European power CSKA Moscow.

"We anticipate that his passion for the game and business acumen will be of considerable value ... to the entire NBA," commissioner David Stern said. (AMBY/AP)

#### WHAT'S FOR SALE

Some of the more unusual items up for bidding include:

- 14 walkie-talkies
- Chinese computer dictionary
- Four-quart slow cooker
- Popcorn maker (SOURCE: MTA)



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# Leave workers' wages alone, judge tells gov

A federal judge yesterday temporarily blocked Gov. David Paterson's order to furlough 100,000 state workers, saying that the employees would be "irreparably harmed" by the loss in wages.

Paterson had proposed a forced unpaid day off each week for "nonessential" workers as legislators contend with a \$9.2 billion state deficit and a budget agreement that is more than 40 days overdue. The governor calculated a weekly savings of \$30 million from the fur-

loughs, which were to start Monday.

"The state work force will not be making any sacrifice, and that's unfortunate," Paterson said in reaction to U.S. District Judge Lawrence Kahn's decision.

Paterson also did an about-face yesterday, reluctantly rescinding raises to some staff after his decision to give pay hikes to members of his press office became tabloid fodder. Public employee unions had

accused the Democrat of hypocrisy for promoting some of his staff while he tried to impose furloughs.

The governor's office said raises of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 to four press aides will be shelved.



Paterson

"We're not going to let this become a distraction," Paterson Communications Director Morgan Hook said yesterday. "We're going to do what is not the right thing and pull back these promotions." (AMNY/PA)



Their "Super" plan Quarterbacks Eli Manning, left, and Mark Sanchez visit the Meadowlands yesterday to support their teams' bid to host the 2014 Super Bowl. (GETTY)

## MTA is hiring while it's firing

The MTA is hiring more managers for top dollar even though it's giving hundreds of station agents and other workers the ax, amNewYork has learned.

The agency recently posted "help wanted" notices for three subway cleaning supervisors who would earn between \$109,100 and \$183,700.

The MTA is set to cut cleaning crews that sweep

the trains as it scrambles to fill an \$800 million deficit.

"I can't get over the irony," said John Samuelson, president of the Transport Workers Union Local 100.

Recent job vacancies also included seven managers in the bus and maintenance divisions, earning between \$71,500 and \$192,900.

The maintenance department has about one manager for every four workers.

NYC Transit recently shook up its subway department, eliminating five management positions created in 2008. But last month, those managers were reassigned to other subway departments, according to a letter.

"Jobs will continue to be filled when those positions are required to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the system," a spokesman said. (HEATHER HARRISON)



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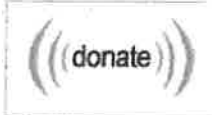


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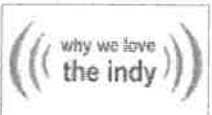
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### Transit Coalition Defends Jobs

By [Jon Gerberg](#)

From the [May 12, 2010](#) issue | Posted in [Local](#) | [Email this article](#)

**Thousands of union workers and supporters attended a rally at Penn Station in Manhattan on May 4 to speak out against public transportation cuts.**

The rally was organized by Keep America Moving, a nationwide coalition of labor, environmental and community groups advocating affordable and green mass transit. Member organizations include the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the Working Families Party and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

“This campaign is a child of the financial crisis,” said J.P. Patafio, the national coordinator of Keep America Moving. “Transit workers around the country are facing serious cutbacks in service and in rates. If we want to invest in the future, and the future is a green economy, then we need to invest in mass transit.”

Demonstrators marched from Penn Station to the headquarters of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority on 44th Street and Madison Avenue to deliver a symbolic pink slip to Jay Walder, the chairman and CEO of the MTA.

Participating organizations included the NY C Student Union, the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Sierra Club and West Harlem-based WE ACT for Environmental Justice.

“Our interests in this are mutual,” said NY C Student Union’s Director of Political Action Lucas Johnson, who spoke at the rally. “Workers, students, environmentalists and the rest of the community — we can all agree that we need more funding for public transportation.”

This kind of coalition effort, Patafio says, is especially important in the wake of service and workforce cuts by the MTA, which currently faces a budget shortfall of nearly \$800 million.

While the MTA has received \$1 billion in federal stimulus funding, 10 percent of which can be used for operational costs, the city has not used any of these funds to prevent the layoffs.

Recently proposed cutbacks include firing almost 500 station agents and eliminating the W and V trains, as well as 33 local and express bus lines.

On May 6, a Manhattan Supreme Court justice issued a temporary restraining order to stop the MTA from laying off 475 station agents, pending a hearing to ensure that the MTA had followed “proper procedure” in conducting the layoffs. However, as *The Independent* went to press, the MTA had already laid off 250 station agents who patrol platforms and do not work in station booths.

On the same day that the layoffs were postponed, the MTA also announced plans to fire another 1,000 transit workers, including cleaning crew and subway announcers.

(continued on reverse)



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John Samuelson, president of TWU Local 100, says that a key aim of the coalition is to build union participation at a local, state and national level, which will then increase pressure on lawmakers to put transportation and labor issues at the top of their agenda.

Other initiatives for Keep America Moving include a series of town hall meetings throughout the country in early June, as well as pushing for emergency funding and working on legislation that would provide more federal support for public transportation.

Still, for station agents faced with the prospect of losing their jobs, emergency funding will come too late.

“What am I going to do? Start my life over at 35?” said Peggy Viaud, a station agent who has belonged to TWU Local 100 for the last four years.

Once she is laid off, Viaud, who attended the rally, plans to apply for food stamps and unemployment benefits for the first time.

“I had it all planned. I figured I’d pay off my car and buy a house in two years — live the American Dream,” said Viaud, who lives in Crown Heights, Brooklyn, “Now the new American Dream is to have a job.”

*For nine years, The Independent has printed truth in the face of power. With political and economic systems faltering, there is an opportunity for real change from the bottom up. But this means having a vibrant independent media. Consider supporting The Independent as a monthly sustainer, donating as little as \$5 a month. Please visit [indypendent.org/donate](http://indypendent.org/donate).*



# DAILY NEWS

## ATTAWAY, JORGE!



**YANKS ROMP  
— SEE SPORTS**

JAMES KEIVOM/DAILY NEWS

## SUBWAY SECURITY FIASCO

# SEE NO EVIL

SEE  
PAGE  
5

**Cameras cost  
\$23G apiece and  
still don't work!**

# SUBWAY'S BLIND SPOT



Bulbs like this one hide cameras that aren't functional all over the subway system. Photo by Kevin Hagen

## Camera system is years late, over budget, doesn't record

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

THIS IS NYC Transit's fancy new camera — it costs \$23,000 and doesn't even record.

A four-year push to hook up hundreds of cameras in 32 subway stations has become an embarrassing boondoggle, with a ballooning pricetag and nothing yet to show for it.

The 910 cameras, designed to capture images of straphangers entering and exiting turnstiles, won't even be wired to recording devices until some time next month.

By then, the pricetag will have grown from \$15 million to \$21.3 million — meaning each camera will cost a staggering \$23,000.

Critics say the bungle is emblematic of how the Metropolitan Transportation Authority repeatedly fouls up technology and security projects, often in dramatic and costly fashion.

And critics fear the foulups are not only a waste of money — they potentially leave the city vulnerable. Nearly nine years after the 9/11 terror attacks, only 46% of the city's 4,100 subway system cameras are wired to working recording devices, the MTA admits.

The importance of security cameras reemerged two weeks ago, when a crude car bomb was discovered in an SUV in the heart of Times Square.

In the wake of that near-usage, Mayor Bloomberg visited London, which boasts 12,000 cameras in its subway system. Those cameras were key in helping authorities identify the terrorists who bombed the Tube in 2005.

Transit experts, including some MTA executives, say the \$23,000 camera illustrates precisely how the authority has aimed too high, making projects overly complicated while lacking the technical expertise and management to shepherd them to completion.

"A lot of times you need to learn to walk before you run, but they want to start running before walking," said Jerome Gold, who worked for the independent engineering company monitoring major projects for the MTA board.

The problems with the MTA's surveillance cameras, watchdogs say, stretch from top to bottom.

Different types of camera equipment have been installed by different contractors under the

## MTA SECURITY

These are three of the major companies hired to install cameras and other security-related technology in the subways:

### Lockheed Martin

Contract signed in 2005,  
952 cameras installed,  
none recording

### STS/EA Technologies

Contract signed in 2005,  
915 cameras installed,  
915 working

### TAP Electrical

Contract signed in 2006,  
910 cameras installed,  
none working.

Source: MTA

oversight of different MTA units. Some were hooked up as part of station rehabilitations while others fell under anti-terror programs, with different arms of the MTA overseeing them.

"It's all over the place," one source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The \$23,000 camera debacle came about, critics say, because the agency wanted to raise the bar on its camera system — but raised it too high.

While a previous project to install 16 cameras in 60 stations stored recordings on site, NYC Transit wanted contractor TAP Electrical to store all recordings from the 910 cameras — about 28 per station — on a network created by a new company.

The agency believed the new network would be able to handle the larger amount of data and enable information to be transmitted digitally, NYC Transit spokesman Paul Fleuranges said.

Only it didn't work out. There were technical glitches, and attempts by the start-up company to fix the software failed, Fleuranges said. Then the start-up went belly up.

NYC Transit is now replacing the flawed equipment with devices manufactured by Panasonic and expect to have the cameras completely up and running in June — more than three years behind schedule.

pdonohue@nydailynews.com

**POLL: Will more cameras make you feel safer in the subway?**

NYDailyNews.com/local

## Meter maids summoned to fight terror

LAS VEGAS — Parking attendants and meter maids could be the nation's latest line of defense against terrorist attacks.

A new government program aims to train thousands of parking industry employees nationwide to watch for and report anything suspicious — abandoned cars, for example, or people hanging around garages, taking photographs or asking unusual questions.

Organizers say parking attendants and enforcement officers are as important to thwarting attacks as the two Times Square street vendors who alerted police to a smoking SUV that was found to contain a gasoline-and-propane bomb.

"We can no longer afford as a nation to say, 'It doesn't impact me or my family, so therefore I'm not getting involved,'" Bill Arrington of the Transportation Security Ad-

ministration told parking industry professionals at a convention this week in Las Vegas. "We're saying, 'Please, sir, get involved.'"

The program has been in the works for about a year and gave its first presentation at the convention, attended by hundreds of people who run parking operations for cities, universities, stadiums and other places around the country.

The Associated Press



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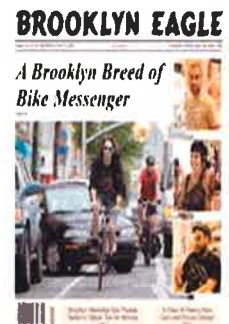
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## Community News



### Hundreds of Angry Riders Protest MTA Bus Cuts

by Harold Egelin ([edit@brooklyneagle.net](mailto:edit@brooklyneagle.net)), published online 05-21-2010

#### Tensions High at Golden's Southwest Brooklyn Meeting

By Harold Egelin  
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

BAY RIDGE — Hundreds of upset mass transit riders from Bay Ridge to Gravesend packed a town hall meeting to voice their opposition to the transit agency's upcoming cuts and changes to bus routes that many depend on for work, errands, shopping, business and leisure.

Two MTA governmental and public relations staff members got an earful at the event held by State Senator Marty Golden at Xaverian High School on Wednesday evening as people voiced complaints and frustrations, and elected officials added their criticism and alternative ideas. Almost all of the auditorium's 900 seats were filled.

"We're not going to take it anymore! We cannot take the cuts the MTA is making. They will devastate our communities and will be a disaster for our seniors," said Golden, a Republican/Conservative representing Southwest Brooklyn. "The Third Avenue B37 and express buses are our lifelines," he said, listing the effects on his communities.

Among the affected routes are the B37, which will be replaced by a re-routed B70 in Bay Ridge but without full Third Avenue service to downtown; and the elimination of weekend X27 and X28 express bus service. Also planned are the complete elimination of the B23 and B31 overnight service, weekend B2 elimination, and service reductions on the B4, B16 and B64 bus lines.

"Does it make you feel like second-class citizens?" said Councilman Vincent Gentile. "They're building the Second Avenue subway while they're cutting the service in Brooklyn. With weekend express bus service cut out, they might as well post a sign: Brooklyn Not Welcome in Manhattan on Weekends."

"I can't walk down the subway steps," said World War II veteran Howard Dunn about the lack of elevators at the R subway stations in Bay Ridge. Then he asked the MTA representatives, "Do you have a recorder running? No, you're taking notes!" Like others, he expressed surprise at the lack of a full record by the MTA of the event.

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Dozens of riders, in a long center aisle line heading to a microphone, spoke of the hardships and problems affecting their lives once the cuts and changes go into effect on June 27. A Gravesend resident who relies on express bus service said that she "will be forced to retire" without it.

Two employees of Kleinfelds Bridal, a famed bridal store long located in Bay Ridge that moved to Manhattan, told of the impact on the store's employees, most of whom live in Bay Ridge and use express buses now slated for weekend elimination. Many are over 60 and cannot climb subway stairs. The two employees told of the critical need of weekend service.

Two MTA union bus drivers, one of whom drove the B37 and B63 routes, said the MTA told the union that 235 bus runs in Brooklyn are being cut. However, he added, back in 2008 they were told that Brooklyn service would increase by 200 runs.

When asked if MTA staffers take mass transit, one of the public relations employees said that they do, especially "the planners and service managers who made the changes. I took the subway here and will go home on a bus."

With the MTA mainly an autonomous agency with little oversight, Golden told the crowd about new legislation in Albany, the MTA Finance Authorization Bill, which would allow an independent review of MTA finance books.

Golden, Gentile and Assemblyman Peter Abbate mentioned that the MTA should take advantage of the huge amounts of federal stimulus funds marked for the city, noting that cash-strapped mass transit agencies across the country have used them.

Also mentioned at the meeting was the Public Transit Act of 2010 now pending in Congress that could prevent service cuts. The speaker urged Sen. Charles Schumer to back the bill.

Several attendees leaving the meeting talked about their frustrations about not having a full direct discussion with top MTA officials and board members who were missing from the event.

\*\*\*

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Bay Ridge Eagle





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Monday, May 24, 2010

50¢ - NYDailyNews.com

RACING FINAL

# DAILY NEWS

## Union suing over MTA move to ax 3rd-year raise

### EXCLUSIVE

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

#### ENOUGH ALREADY!

Transit officials should be forced to end their “unfair and ultimately illegal” effort to deny transit workers a raise in January, the workers union argues in court papers being filed today.

The Appellate Division of state

Supreme Court should order the MTA to live with all the provisions of a three-year contract that an arbitration panel fashioned last summer after months of hearings, Transport Workers Union Local 100 argues.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority gave bus and subway workers raises in the first two years of the pact – but filed a lawsuit to get out of giving workers a

3% raise next January, which it says is too costly.

The union’s motion is the latest maneuver in a labor-management battle that has intensified since new leaders took control of the MTA and the union.

Former management consultant Jay Walder became MTA chairman in October, promising to increase efficiency. Track worker John Samuelsen was elected Local 100 president in December,

promising to more aggressively fight to preserve jobs and benefits.

Walder and Samuelsen have been engaging in an ongoing war of words over the issue.

The MTA implemented two separate 2% raises last year, a pattern it is repeating this year.

The contract calls for a single 3% raise next January. A Supreme Court justice last year upheld the contract, saying it was in line with what City Hall had granted city

workers and wasn’t unreasonable.

The MTA filed its partial appeal, seeking to vacate the third-year raise and a provision capping health care contributions by workers.

Union lawyers are now arguing that there’s no basis in state law for the courts to vacate just some provisions in a contract, as the MTA is seeking.

*pdonohue@nydailynews.com*

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# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Thursday, June 17, 2010

## Drill, baby, drill - more subways

**T**he next time President Obama is in town, he should head straight for the BP station at the corner of Houston and Lafayette Sts.

Directly beneath the hated green and yellow BP sign are twin descending stairways marked with the name of the greatest single energy-conserving enterprise in America, a system that saves more than a billion gallons of gasoline a year.

"SUBWAY."

Security concerns may preclude Obama from following our mayor's example and



Michael  
Daly

riding the subterranean trains that carry in excess of 4 million riders a day.

National security concerns demand that he raise his voice on behalf of a system whose every rider does his daily bit to make us less dependent on oil and its attendant evils. In particular, Obama should call for passage of a measure introduced by leading Democratic senators last month that would award \$2 billion in operating funding for public transportation across the country.

Some \$345 million would go to the New York area, which is \$345 million more than the feds presently contribute.

The feds have been reasonably generous with funding for capital projects like the Second Ave. subway line.

But Washington has declined to kick in for the day-to-day cost of running the subway, whose cars so rightly have an American flag affixed to the side.

The government pays more to operate the tiny subway that carries lawmakers from their offices to the Capitol, a convenience Obama describes using as a senator in the

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CITY FINAL

# DAILY NEWS

opening lines of "The Audacity of Hope."

He rode our subway back when he was a student in New York but mentions it in his autobiographical "Dreams of My Father" only in connection with an unpleasant incident.

"The seat I had offered to a middle-aged woman on the subway was snatched up by a burly young man," Obama wrote.

The kid from Hawaii seems not to have understood that this was an aberration, that people who behave this way in New York are liable to encounter even burlier young men who register an emphatic objection.

Now that he is President, Obama should recognize the subway as a system that offers a seat, or at least a ride, to millions who might otherwise be traveling in gas-guzzling automobiles.

In his Oval Office speech on Tuesday, Obama said the "larger lesson" of the spill is that as oil grows scarcer, companies will seek riskier places to find it.

"For decades, we have known the days of cheap and easily accessible oil were numbered," he went on. "For decades, we've talked and talked about the need to end America's century-long addiction to fossil fuels. And for decades, we have failed to act."

He proceeded to speak of wind turbines, solar panels and energy-efficient windows, but uttered not a word about the system that has saved more than 20 billion gallons of gasoline in the decades since he rode our trains.

That system is in dire need of operating funds. Obama already has an answer for anybody who says Washington can't spare the dough.

"There are some who believe that we can't afford those costs right now," he said on Tuesday of programs that reduce oil dependence. "I say we can't afford not to."

Meanwhile, if you want to hurt BP and help America, ride the subway.

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# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

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## DAILY NEWS

Friday, June 18, 2010

### Fares for kids may stay free

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

#### METROCOOL!

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is poised to scrap plans to charge students for bus and subway rides to school in September, sources said.

MTA officials would keep the free student MetroCard program running even though the state

Legislature was on the verge last night of providing them just \$25 million — a far cry from what the MTA sought, sources said.

“It would be a victory,” said Valerie Bynaar, 15, of Harlem, a student at A. Phillip Randolph High School. “Students can get to school and have an education and have a future.”

Valerie, who protested the cuts at several student rallies, is one of 885,000 students who receives the free and discounted rides. A majority of the students are from low-income families and qualify for free school lunches.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder and other MTA officials have argued student transportation is a city and state responsibility — and that the authority no longer can

afford to walk away from potential revenue as it grapples with a \$800 million budget gap.

If government paid full fares for the kids, the MTA would reap \$214 million a year, according to the MTA. For most of the past 15 years, the state and city contributed a combined \$90 million annually.

But the state and city are confronting their own multibillion-dollar deficits, and officials gave no reason to suggest they would increase transit funding. The city will continue to contribute \$45 million a year to the student MetroCard program, a spokesman said.

Saving the program could push the MTA’s planned 7.5% fare hike in January even higher.

Under the MTA budget adopted in December, students would pay half fare in September.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)

THE NEW YORK TIMES **NEW YORK** FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 2010

## Deal to Save Student Transit Discounts Is Near

By **MICHAEL M. GRYNBAUM**

Students are likely to keep the discounted fares they pay to ride New York City’s buses and subways, with legislators and transit officials close to an agreement on Thursday to save the service.

The state would provide \$25 million to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to help retain the free or cheaper fares under a deal that was being hammered out in Albany.

If approved — never a sure thing in the capital — the deal would lead to only a partial restoration of money for the program. But officials said the transportation authority had agreed to cover the rest of the costs.

A spokesman for the authority declined to comment on Thursday.

The authority placed the discounted fares on the chopping block in December to help close

an \$800 million budget shortfall. The decision to retain the discounts would force the authority to take other cost-saving steps.

The debate over student fares, which played out for months, was notable for the level of opposition to the authority’s plan from politicians and other public officials, which outweighed even the resentment over plans to cut bus service and subway lines.

Transit officials insisted that it was not their responsibility to pay for the program, noting that most cities support student transportation by using state and local money. In New York, those contributions have stagnated or disappeared; the Legislature slashed its financing for the program to \$6 million in November, down from \$45 million at its peak.

The authority’s threat to cut the student fares may have shaken a few extra dollars from the

budget tree, but the \$25 million figure being floated on Thursday was far less than what transit officials had hoped to receive. They had suggested that the agency required upward of \$200 million to continue the program.

Even as a resolution grew closer, some legislators said that the authority had made a mistake in using the student fares as a bargaining chip.

“These kids should never have been used as a pawn in a larger dispute about M.T.A. funding,” said Assemblyman Richard L. Brodsky.

Still, the authority and its chairman, Jay H. Walder, were working from a timeworn playbook: The authority used a similar tactic in 1994, after Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani cut the city’s financing for the program. Mr. Giuliani eventually gave in, and the discounted fares lived on.

#### Back of the bus

Manhattan: On Monday, I — along with many other people — waited well over 30 minutes for the eastbound M50 bus. Finally one arrived, and of course we complained to the driver. The driver explained that he was not to blame and, in fact, he was not late. He stated that the driver scheduled for the run prior to his had not shown up for work. A substitute driver was not re-assigned, so that time slot simply did not run. Apparently this is the common procedure for the MTA when a bus driver does not come to work. Are you kidding me? That is beyond absurd and is a clear example of the selfishness and laziness that run rampant within the MTA. MTA supervisors: In the future, if a bus driver is a no-show, a substitute driver needs to be put in his or her place immediately. No other option exists. We are paying you to do this, as well as having the buses and trains run as close to schedule as possible. *Eileen Maher.*





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## One stop forward, two stops back

**B**race yourself, city subway and bus riders. Next week – in the heat of summer – we'll begin feeling the brunt of the worst service cuts we've seen in decades.

A bad economy and a failure to seek transit aid from the federal government will result in the killing or downsizing of scores of bus routes and all or part of three subway lines. Disabled riders who use paratransit will face harsh cuts, too. Literally millions of us will suffer greater waiting times, more crowding, extra transfers and longer trips.

And even *with* those drastic reductions, a fare hike is looming. The Metropolitan Transportation Authority says it is just about certain to raise bus, subway and commuter fares by January. The only real issue is by how much.

There has been some new good news among the bad. First, the MTA's proposal to end free or half fares for 585,000 students – many from families with very low incomes – has been withdrawn.

Second, Albany just took an important step to improve the lives of some bus riders: The Legislature approved the use of cameras to enforce several high-speed bus lanes.

Five special already-constructed or planned routes

### BE OUR GUEST

BY GENE RUSSIANOFF  
and LINDSEY LUSHER SHUTE

will use a series of strategies to decrease running times, including painted bus lanes, paying fares before boarding the bus, three-door buses for quicker entry and exits, priority traffic signals – and now bus lane enforcement by camera.

Together, these steps have proved effective in cities around the world, significantly upping bus travel speeds.

For this, riders should thank the legislation's original sponsors, state Sen. Martin Dilan (D-Brooklyn) and Assemblyman Jonathan Bing (D-Manhattan), as well as legislative leaders Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan) and Senate Democratic Conference Leader John Sampson (D-Brooklyn).

The big-picture news, however, is as grim as waiting for a train or bus at 3 in the morning.

Let's focus on one of the train lines that will become extinct: The W, which serve(d) Queens and Manhattan. The MTA's own summary of the proposed cut illustrates the impact: Some 56,000 weekday passengers will experience longer waits, 77,000 weekday passengers will have longer trips, and "passengers traveling on the N, Q, R will experience more riders per train."

The MTA's cuts also include new and less generous crowding standards for off-peak hours and weekends. These are called "loading guidelines," which gives you a sense of what transit officials

think of their customers.

Hilariously enough, current guidelines purport to provide enough service so that all off-peak and weekend riders get a seat. The guidelines that go into effect next week call for 10 to 18 standees per car, a standard that ensures longer waits and more discomfort.

By the MTA's own estimates, more than 3.5 million riders will be negatively affected by the new rules.

On the bus side, tens of thousands of riders will find their routes gone or combined with other routes. In all, more than 570 bus stops will be eliminated. A pilot plan to use private vans in underserved areas faces many hurdles, including effective enforcement.

These cuts will hurt the city's economy and environment. And they could have been avoided.

We know the state's cupboards are bare. But Gov. Paterson and the MTA could have agreed to use a portion of federal stimulus funds to prevent a deterioration of service.

There's still the possibility of getting emergency transit aid from Washington and restoring some service. Ten U.S. senators – including New York's Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand – are sponsoring a bill that would raise hundreds of millions of dollars for New York-area transit.

So while you are waiting in the heat for that bus or train, give the senators a call in support.

Russianoff is staff attorney and chief spokesman for the Straphangers Campaign. Lusher Shute is director of environmental campaigns at Transportation Alternatives.

RACING FINAL  
**DAILY NEWS**

Wednesday, June 23, 2010





## DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL

# Save the workers

**T**here's a deal to be made that would enable the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to avoid laying off 700 workers Monday and to return to the payroll an additional 260 who have already been cut loose.

The choice is largely up to the Transport Workers Union, headed by John Samuelson. It is a simple, although painful one: Rescue jobs by providing labor savings.

With bus drivers, mechanics, train operators and others about to be thrown into unemployment, the conflict between public-sector labor costs and personnel expenses is all of a sudden starkly real. Something has to give.

MTA Chairman Jay Walder has sought to make up for plummeting revenues from dedicated taxes as well as for hits to state funding by cutting expenses, hiking fares and slashing service. Millions of riders are about to lose bus and subway lines or have to cope with more-crowded trains.

These realities are no more the fault of the TWU than of the public at large. But they are hard facts that demand action.

Walder has presented Samuelson with a savings plan that would start the MTA toward long-term fiscal health, avert layoffs and permit rehiring — while sparing the agency's 34,000 workers any financial sacrifice.

The proposal is fair and offered in the spirit of easing the severe consequences that will otherwise befall a huge cadre of wage earners. If anything, Walder's plan is open to the criticism of

asking the union for too little at a time when the MTA appears likely to go deeper into the red.

His scheme would apply only to new workers. Fresh recruits — and only fresh recruits — would be asked to make modest contributions to pension costs; work a few years longer to reach retirement eligibility, contribute to health care premiums, and wait five years to reach top pay rather than three.

Those terms are widely applied among New York's public workers, in part because the Legislature this year approved pension reforms for all levels of government in the state — except, shamefully, for the MTA and the city.

A single provision would be unique to the TWU. Walder would have workers forgo a 3% raise in 2011 and accept the same amount of money in a one-time payment at the end of the year.

The collective savings plus flexibility in assigning workers would allow the MTA to shift from layoffs to trimming staff by normal retirements and resignations. There would still be suffering — but only on the part of the riders as staff reductions forced service cuts.

Samuelson says he is not open to amending contract provisions, such as pension and health benefits, for the long term. He says, however, that he has an alternative cost-saving plan that would allow the MTA to cut the payroll through attrition. He declined to make it public.

With Walder's cards on the table, Samuelson needs to explain how he would save his members from hitting the bricks.

# War and remembrance

**S**ixty years ago today, America's forgotten war began. Troops from North Korea stormed across the 38th Parallel, trying to impose Communist rule on a nation that had been divided between Soviet and American zones at the end of World War II.

The Cold War was suddenly white hot, and American troops went into battle.

Strictly speaking, the campaign was a United Nations police action, but those who fought knew far better. It was war, the Korean War.

Many famous Americans served, but none was famous for doing his duty at Pusan, Inchon, Kaesong, Panmunjom and many other locations that seemed a world away.

There were Jimmy Carter and James Baker, later a President and a secretary of state. There was Charlie Rangel, who would rise from Harlem to chair the House Ways and Means Committee,

and Sen. Arlen Specter. There were Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, and fellow astronaut Scott Carpenter. And there were Ted Williams, the Hall of Fame ballplayer, and Berry Gordy, genius of Motown.

In all, 1.8 million Americans answered the call. Almost 37,000 were killed and 34,000 wounded. More than 8,000 were listed as missing.

The war was among the toughest of slogs until President Dwight Eisenhower brought it to a close with an armistice, July 27, 1953.

The shooting stopped, but there has never been a peace treaty. Nor has the generation that fought in Korea really ever received its due. The tomfoolery of the TV comedy "M\*A\*S\*H" is the only image many Americans have of that war.

The men and women of the Korean War have been our quietest heroes, but heroes they are. We owe them honor and thanks, today and every day.

# An ill for every cure

**A**n urgent communique was received yesterday from the staff of Bronx state Sen. Jose Serrano, asking us to "please print a correction — it might spare us a flood of calls and angry letters to our office."

Our pleasure. Serrano did not sponsor the measure that would require manufacturers of baby bottles and sippy cups to add labels warning that these early childhood aids to nutrition can promote tooth decay.

The senatorial ninny who put his name to this exercise in nanny statism was actually Jose Peralta of Queens. All calls and angry letters should be directed to Peralta's office.

Be advised, though, that Albany is rife with feel-good bills written by a Legislature that has come

to believe it can cure all the world's ills by passing laws — even as it can't enact a budget.

Among the current examples: Manhattan Sen. Tom Duane championed a law intended to reduce bullying by requiring schools to create atmospheres of tolerance and to report instances of bullying to the state Education Department. Yes, that will do the trick.

Also, there's Manhattan Sen. Liz Krueger, who announced a "major victory in the fight against animal cruelty with the passage of legislation that outlaws animal crush videos. The highly disturbing crush videos often depict women crushing small animals with their feet or shoes for the purpose of erotic pleasure."

Rest easy, New York. Krueger is on that case.

# Poland's fateful choice on terror

BE OUR GUEST

BY SHAI BAITEL

**Y**ou may remember the dramatic assassination, a true victory for those who combat terrorism: In January in a Dubai hotel room, Hamas leader Mahmoud al-Mabhouh was killed, apparently the work of Israeli intelligence.

You may remember the fallout: Some European nations launched investigations into how passports of their citizens were reportedly forged to facilitate the killing.

Well, now the handwringing in the wake of that heroic act has taken a tragic turn. Poland, Germany and Israel, three nations bound by shared values and a very sensitive past, are risking their vital relationship because of a single man the Polish authorities now have in custody.

This month, an Israeli citizen identified only as Uri Brodsky was arrested at Warsaw's airport after Germany issued a European arrest warrant for him. He is suspected of illegally acquiring a German passport in 2009 for one of al-Mabhouh's alleged assassins.

Poland now faces a stark and fateful choice. It can pursue the charges to the hilt and turn Brodsky over to Germany to face trial. Or it can consider the unique nature of the "crime" committed by this man, which dealt an important blow to one of the Mideast's most notorious terrorist groups — and the unique ties between Israel, Germany and Poland — and decline to extradite Brodsky to Germany.

Germany and Poland, of course, share a painful history of World War II and the Holocaust, which were catalysts for the establishment of the state of Israel. In the years since, the three nations have truly bonded. Germany has honorably acknowledged the horrors inflicted by the Nazis and Poland has owned up to some of the darkest chapters of its history.

These difficult but necessary steps have been the cornerstones of a deepening relationship between the three countries.

In recent years, Germany and Poland have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to Israel's existence and security. The three

nations have collaborated in a vast range of areas, such as economy, science, culture and also security matters, promoting shared democratic values, which stand in stark contrast to the experience of World War II. The protection of these values has led the free world to a uniting consensus over the most challenging campaigns of all times — combating terrorism.

Yet all this now seems to be ignored by those urging that an example be made of this one man who allegedly played a part in enabling the killing of a terrorist.

Poland's choice is not a simple one. It is bound by an international treaty to extradite this man to a fellow European Union nation, yet at the same time it is heavily invested in the global campaign against terrorism. How can its judicial system make a decision that will not contradict Poland's commitment to combating terrorism?

But to those who appreciate the great strides Poland has made

It must not hand over the Israeli accused of helping kill a Hamas leader

as its scars from World War II have slowly healed, the decision to hand over an Israeli citizen to German authorities is not that complex after all. A nation otherwise committed to Israel's existence and security would, in that one act, be seen to be turning a cold shoulder to a vital friend — even if the Israeli was later to be found guilty of operating in the context of fighting terrorism.

The justice system in Poland would do its government a big favor if it would pour into its deliberation regarding the Israeli prisoner the values and standards that it is expected to consider, morally and historically.

These may not be found in the dry law but are in compliance with Poland's unwritten commitment to Israel, and with the international effort of fighting terrorism effectively, so that terror is prevented — not just in Israel today, but also in Poland and Germany tomorrow.

Baitel has served in Israel's Ministry of Justice and at the United Nations.

## DAILY NEWS

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# VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

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## Don't throw vets under the bus

**S**eafood, L.I.: Is this the way America treats its soldiers who have volunteered in the armed services ("Hardly the warm 'welcome home,'" June 22)? Sgts. Alvin Taylor (right) and Andy (Angel) Moreno left bus-driving jobs behind when they deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and now find they are among the employees on the MTA's layoff list.

The MTA – and America – should be ashamed to treat veterans like that. There are no buyouts for them, so how do they support their families upon return? Jobs should be saved for these returning soldiers. The law should be changed to protect all soldiers who are fighting for the freedom we enjoy as Americans. Some politician should set aside time to help these war-weary servicemen pick up their lives.

*Frances Harwood*



### Handle the truth

**Bronx:** A war general should never criticize his commander in chief, and for that Gen. Stanley McChrystal was fired. However, the fact remains that the changes President Obama made to the rules of engagement last July are costing American lives. Maybe that sheds some light on the general's motivation.

*William L. Gerson*

### Take a number

**Whitestone:** I guess America doesn't need elections this November. We will just force anyone who said anything negative about President Obama to resign. After Gen. Stanley McChrystal, there will be a long line. We'll have vacancies in all branches of government, in our health care sector, our schools, etc., etc.

*Amber Papadopoulos*

### Hair trigger

**Brooklyn:** It took about 50 days for the President to get kickass angry over the ineptitude of BP, but only 12 seconds to get angry at his general. Well, that's an improvement.

*A. Scherman*

### As seen on TV

**Brooklyn:** Hey, BP, take a suggestion from my 7- and 9-year-old daughters: Mighty Putty. The instructions are on the box. God bless Billy Mays.

*Charles Eisenbach*

### Color commentary

**Antonia:** I'm not a fan of BP CEO Tony Hayward, but for *Voicer* MaryAnn Peck to use the phrase "lily white" to get her point across was unnecessary and offensive. The phrase is a racial slur.

*Paula Valentini*

### Safety first

**Hurley, N.Y.:** Re "Girl swept away by sea" (June 23): Why choose a beach, an amusement park or any place with a pool for a school trip? These are not educational experiences. Let children go to these places with their families. This is a tragedy that never should have happened.

*Joan P. Kaufman*

### We've been warned

**Eastchester, N.Y.:** The potential Times Square bomber and his buddies everywhere may be duds, but they are telling us something we do not want to believe: This is war – between Islamic radicals and the rest of the world.

*Carmine Masucci*

### Lesson learned

**Fairmont, W.V.:** Harlem Success Academy is another example of the wonders of competition ("Charters score and soar," editorial, June 22). The benefits of simply putting school administrators and teachers in a position where they have to supply a product (education) that meets the standards of the consumers (children and parent(s)) are amazing.

*Jaron M. Condero*

### The mark of hate

**Brooklyn:** If there is any doubt as to why people want to blow up Americans, the incident at the FDNY is your answer ("President's image defaced at firehouse," June 22). The defacing of the President's picture was racism, plain and simple.

*Robert Sibert*

### Try studying

**Ridgewood:** I'm tired of hearing minority groups claim bias every time their children fail ("Ed Dept. big hints at gifted test changes," June 22). If you want your children to excel and get into top schools, have them study hard and take school seriously. As a parent, check up on their progress daily. I'm a Puerto Rican born and raised in the projects, but I worked my rear off in school and never blamed anyone but myself if I failed.

*William Cruz*

### Pleased papa

**Warrensburg, N.Y.:** Thank God for Mayor Bloomberg's citywide initiative to help absent fathers reenter the lives of their children ("Keeping dad in picture," June 21). For four long years, I have been denied contact with my beautiful girls based on a technicality and judicial indifference. Now, I and many others in the same position may have a fighting chance for justice – and for a brighter future for the children we cherish.

*Edward Sweeney*

### Good call

**Yonkers:** After two calls to US Airways customer service representatives in Manila who were of no help whatsoever, I finally demanded to speak to someone in America. What a pleasure to hear the lovely voice of Michelle, who understood my question and responded intelligently and succinctly. What made the conver-

sation even more enjoyable was learning that the Manila contract is up in about a month, and those desperately needed jobs will come back to the U.S. of A.

*Lorraine Caggiano*

### Why not pot?

**Brooklyn:** Until drug use is treated as a health problem instead of a criminal problem, the black market created by prohibition will continue to fund violence in our world ("Reefer madness," editorial, June 18). Ask NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly how much money and manpower he could divert to other needs if prohibition of drugs ended. We've agreed to license and tax alcohol, our most dangerous drug. Why not the others?

*Jerry Goralnick*

### Follow the money

**Brooklyn:** They can raise the taxes on everything we eat, drink or smoke, and it will never be enough. They just want more money to put in their pockets, to give jobs for their family members and set up phony foundations.

*Cary Martin*

### Fees for fizz

**Manhattan:** Enact the soda tax already. No one needs soda to survive. To the contrary, everyone would be healthier without the added sugar in their diet. Who cares how much the bottling industry spends to propagandize? We're smarter than that. We need schools and firehouses, among other necessities on the chopping

block. Anyone who wants soda that bad – let 'em pay for it.

*Suzanne Hayes Kelly*

### Hang up and police

**Brooklyn:** Someone please explain to me how, on a day when the NYPD is supposedly cracking down on drivers who talk or text on handheld cell phones, there is no crackdown on police officers doing the same thing? Just another example of the NYPD thinking it's above the law.

*Stuart C. Hellinger*

### A bone to pick

**Manhattan:** Re Michael Daly's gun industry column "Our greed tragedy" (June 22): I know of at least one child who wakes up crying for a parent who choked to death on a chicken bone. Shall we ban poultry? Are grocery stores making "reckless" profits? Daly's tenuous grasp of basic logic is breathtaking.

*Dana Atchley*

### Food for thought

**Kew Gardens:** I was right behind Mayor Bloomberg at the Mets-Tigers game the other night and watched him eat at least a box and a half of popcorn. Think about the amount of sodium he consumed. "Do as I say..."

*George Travls*

### A-Fraud

**Schenectady, N.Y.:** Now it's obvious what a fraud A-Rod is. While he was using performance-enhancing drugs, he averaged more than 40 home runs a year. Now, as of June 23, he has nine Hall of Fame? I think not.

*Ron Goodman*

Take our daily poll at [NYDailyNews.com](http://NYDailyNews.com)

## poll results

What do you think of the ouster of Gen. Stanley McChrystal as commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan?

**68%** It was the right move! His comments were off base and Gen. Petraeus is a good choice.

**32%** It was wrong! You don't shake up the war effort over a magazine article.

**TODAY'S POLL:** What do you think of the vuvuzelas (horns) that have dominated the World Cup – and beyond?



**TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION**  
OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

**DAILY NEWS**

# MTA nixed our bid to save \$35M and jobs, sez union

Sunday, June 27, 2010

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

THE MTA REJECTED a union offer of approximately \$35 million a year in employee contributions that would have avoided laying off workers, the transit union chief told the Daily News.

The offer would have also staved off some service cuts already in motion, Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelson said yesterday.

The union contributions were earmarked for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's participation in a state-approved early retirement program. The money would allow the authority to reduce head count more slowly through attrition — rather than abrupt layoffs.

Hundreds of pink-slipped bus drivers, mechanics and other workers have been told to turn in their uniforms and badges at a NYC Transit facility tomorrow.

Service cuts, including the elimination of dozens of express and local bus routes, have begun. Some routes saw their last runs Friday, and others shut down last night.

"We want the riding public to know this is on Jay Walder, and not on the union," Samuelson said, referring to the MTA chairman.

"We made a reasonable offer to provide immediate funding in the short term to get through this crisis, and he walked away from it."

Under the union proposal, deductions would be made automatically from workers' biweekly paychecks on a temporary basis, Samuelson said. There are approximately 34,000 MTA workers represented by Local 100.

The MTA yesterday released a statement saying it agreed to mediation but it wouldn't stop the layoffs. If talks are successful, workers potentially could be brought back, the MTA said.

In exchange for the funding, the

union wanted the MTA to agree in writing not to lay off transit workers during the contribution time period.

The MTA balked because it doesn't want to be tied down by an ironclad no-layoff clause because of the unpredictability of the economy and its finances.

*pdonohue@nydailynews.com*

**DAILY NEWS**

**VOICE OF THE PEOPLE**

Monday, June 28, 2010

# MTA bosses should take a hike

**B**rooklyn: The MTA's proposal to the Transport Workers Union is absurd ("Save the workers," editorial, June 25). The concessions it is asking are worth 10 times what it would cost to rehire those who lost their jobs or are currently facing pink slips. TWU President John Samuelson should just say no. If the MTA wants to save on labor costs, the first thing MTA officials should do is to stop spending millions to challenge the contract awarded to the union in binding arbitration. It's a fight they are unlikely to win. Everyone would be better served if they spent that money on an unbiased actuarial analysis of the existing pension plan for employees. The MTA can save hundreds of millions of dollars simply by devising a plan that will get current employees to retire sooner rather than later. This probably won't come to pass, though. Why would the MTA do anything that makes sense?

*Rich Grubert,*  
bus operator



1

In the news

## Coyotes attack Rye girl

Police yesterday were still looking for two coyotes that attacked a 6-year-old girl who was playing in her front yard with her sisters Friday night in suburban Rye, N.Y. The coyotes bit her shoulders and thigh and scratched her back, but the injuries were not life-threatening.

BY MICHAEL

In the news



Liberty's crown draws crowds  
Visitors to the Statue of Liberty have jumped 10 percent since the crown was reopened on July 4, 2009, officials said yesterday. Of the 213,222 visitors over the last year, 85,000 made the trip to Lady Liberty's crown, said Rep. Anthony Weiner who pushed for it to be reopened. **• METRO**



## Serbia trial to start in New York assault case

A man who jumped bail and fled the U.S. after allegedly beating a fellow SUNY Binghamton student into a coma is set to start trial in his native Serbia today. Miladin Kovacevic, 23, faces up to eight years in prison if convicted of assaulting Brooklynite Brian Steinhauer in May 2008. Kovacevic, a basketball player who stands 6-foot-9 and weighs 280 pounds allegedly assaulted the 130-pound Steinhauer in an upstate bar. **• METRO**

6

The number of times police have to be called to a bar (for noise or other complaints) within 60 days, in order to kick in an automatic revocation of its liquor license under a new bill pending in Albany. The bill awaits Gov. David Paterson's signature.

• METRO/CA

# Doomsday dawns for riders in city transit system

Facing longer and more crowded commutes, straphangers begin Day 1 of major service cuts MTA to save \$93 million, but more trouble ahead

Alice Rodriguez will wake up earlier than usual this morning, in order to make time for a commute that's about 25 minutes longer. She'll take a bus that's slow and so crowded people have to stand in the aisles, "or sit in your lap," she said.

Welcome to the future of bus riding in New York City. For years, Rodriguez took either the X16 or X20 express bus from her home in Staten Island to her job as an accountant in Lower Manhattan. Unluckily for her, both routes were eliminated as part of the MTA's doomsday service cuts.

"I don't know what I'll do; I've actually been trying not to think about it. All along I've been thinking, 'This isn't really going to happen, the MTA will stop it at the last minute,'" said Rodriguez, 44. "But they're not. It's horrible."

Rodriguez is one of thou-



Bus and subway travel gets tougher today.

sands of New Yorkers across the city who will see their commutes radically altered today. The MTA

warned about the service cuts for months, but this morning is the first time many will feel their impact.

The cuts help the MTA close its \$800 million

## Lawsuits

Not so fast, say some. Disabled women in Brooklyn sued the MTA last week, charging service cuts violate laws mandating equal treatment for handicapped riders. A second lawsuit on behalf of disabled riders, is expected to be filed this week. And the transit workers union says it's filing a lawsuit to block layoffs of over 400 bus drivers, the Daily News reported.

deficit but real-estate tax revenue is expected to come in much less than expected this year, causing some to speculate that agency could raise fares earlier or higher than the planned 7.5 percent increase in 2011.

• CARLY BALDWIN  
carly.baldwin@metro.us

## Six-month-old baby killed by falling tree limb in park

Central Park's trees continue to kill. Karla DelGallo, a 33-year-old Union City, N.J., woman is in stable condition with head trauma after she and her 6-month-old baby were hit by a falling tree limb Saturday in the park. DelGallo tried to get out of the way of the falling limb, but tripped, said witnesses, and her baby, Gianna



DelGallo and Gianna

Ricciutti, was killed.

The tree was located on

Central Park Zoo property, said a Parks Department spokesperson, and is maintained by the Wildlife Conservation Society.

The Central Park Conservancy is responsible for pruning the 26,000 other trees in the park. Work crews scaled park trees this weekend, and removed 50 rotten branches from 30 trees. **• CARLY BALDWIN**

## News in brief

### Road accidents claim four lives

NEW YORK. Four were killed in vehicle accidents in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Manhattan Saturday. Three of those killed were on motorcycles. **• METRO**

### Fire upstate kills six kids

PORT EDWARD, NY. Six

children, ages 1 to 12, were killed in a house fire on Saturday in Fort Edward, a town some 50 miles north of Albany.

• METRO

### Biker hits bear in New Jersey

FREDON, NJ. A motorcycle rider hit a black bear along Route 94 northbound in northwest New Jersey on Saturday morning. Neither rider nor bear was badly hurt. **• METRO**

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# POSTOPINION

## Schumer's Phony Reform

### Bashing corps. & milking them



**BRADLEY A. SMITH**

**S**EN. Chuck Schumer is pushing hard to limit corporate campaign spending — and to maximize his own campaign's take from corporations. But that hypocritical chutzpah is entirely fitting when it comes to the so-called DISCLOSE Act — which is a naked effort to squelch the speech of Americans who might criticize Democrats in this year's campaign season.

Democrats are trying to rewrite campaign-finance law to limit corporate (and grass-roots) spending on politics. And Schumer — who faces no meaningful opposition this fall — is looking to raise every buck he can from the folks he wants to crack down on.

In a fund-raising letter sent last month to Wall Street and various corporate political action committees (PACs), he says, "We've been making terrific progress with our DIS-

CLOSE Act, the legislation we've proposed that would rein in corporate spending on elections." Then the demand: "But while all that's going on in Washington, right now I need your help with my campaign."

The end of June, Schumer explained, would mark a deadline for Federal Election Commission reports — and thus his "last chance to dissuade a well-funded challenge from a corporate-backed candidate."

In other words, he was bragging about his hopes to ban independent political advocacy by the very people he was hitting up for donations — in order, he claimed, to intimidate out of the race any candidate whom the same sorts of people might back.

As it happens, Schumer is one of the Senate's biggest corporate fund-raisers. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, he's the No. 1 congressional recipient of contributions from individuals and PACs from the finance, insurance, real estate, securities, entertainment, business services and alcohol industries (among others). In this election cycle, only two senators — Majority Leader Harry

Reid of Nevada and Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.) — have accepted more PAC money than Schumer.

The DISCLOSE Act is supposedly intended to overturn the recent Supreme Court ruling that threw out the ban on "independent expenditures" by both corporate and union giving, a ban that extended to "corporations" that are plainly grass-roots political groups. Yet the DISCLOSE bill would muzzle the grass-roots and the corporations — but not the unions.

So great is Schumer's chutzpah that he (along with Wisconsin's Russ Feingold and Vermont's Pat Leahy) is using discloseact.com — a Web site that's supposedly dedicated to backing the campaign "reform" bill — to build a fund-raising database.

Thus far, the trio has collected the e-mails and ZIP codes (essential for fund-raising purposes) of some 25,800 Americans. Deep in the fine print of the privacy-policy statement is



**Right: Schumer, a top fundraiser from corporations, claims he's fighting to limit their political influence.**

the note that the information they enter will be "provided to the sponsoring campaign committees," which will share the data with "allied organizations and campaigns."

That's what the DISCLOSE Act is about: helping the campaigns of congressional Democrats this fall.

Despite its gimmicky title, the bill isn't about disclosure. Hours

before the vote, with no debate, House Democrats inserted a provision to let unions not have to report funds they transfer to other groups for political purposes.

Unlike the McCain-Feingold law, which was passed in spring 2002 and only went into effect after that fall's elections, DISCLOSE would go into effect within 30 days — even if the Federal Election Commission didn't have time to write regulations to implement the law. That would leave grass-roots groups risking an after-the-fact crackdown if they dare criticize incumbents this fall.

Schumer's outrageous effort to write a permanent political advantage into law illustrates why the Framers wrote the First Amendment to read, "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech."

Bradley A. Smith, a former Federal Election Commission chairman, heads the Center for Competitive Politics, which protects First Amendment political rights.

## Where the MTA Should Be Saving

**A**T next week's public MTA hearings on its proposed token-booth closings and other customer-service reductions, city and state lawmakers will talk tough about sticking up for the straphanger against the big, bad MTA. But none of the pols will say the obvious: Modest wage concessions from transit and railroad workers could save us from some of these cuts.

These workers took home an average of \$69,500 last year — not counting health-care and pension benefits far more generous than the average New Yorker, let alone the average straphanger, enjoys.

Yes, the MTA is wasteful and inefficient, spends too much on lawyers and black cars and all the rest of the usual complaints. But big savings have to come from its workforce — or at the expense of its customers.

Two weeks ago, the MTA's first round of cuts eliminated two subway lines and 37 bus routes, reduced frequency of other buses and trains — and cut basic cleaning. But much more is ahead.

These early cuts, including nearly 1,000 jobs, will save just \$93 million — less than a quarter of the MTA's \$400 million budget shortfall.

And the budget hole is growing. The new tax on downstate payrolls, created in

last year's MTA bailout, was supposed to bring in \$1.5 billion a year. But that didn't allow for the continued stagnation of the local economy. Last month, the MTA had to slash its forecasted take from the tax by \$56 million — on top of a \$280 million writedown this spring. The agency's revenues from taxes on real-estate transactions are \$58 million short, too.

So we'll see even more drastic plans in the next few months — less service and more trash, and a January fare hike that could bring a monthly MetroCard's cost to \$105, up from \$89 now.

But service cuts are a losing game. They inflict pain on the riding public and area economy, without saving the MTA very much.

Consider: Even as it cuts trains, buses, maintenance and (probably) capital spending, the MTA's huge payroll costs are still going up.

In 2009, the MTA's 74,708 workers took home nearly \$5.92 billion in cash pay (not including health or pensions). That represents 54 percent of the authority's budget — and was up nearly 1.5 percent, or \$75 million, from the 2008 figure. (Data from seethroughny.net.)

In other words: The MTA could have saved nearly as much as it will wring from this first service-cut round just by freezing the payroll.

Last year, personal income fell in New York City by 3.3 percent. So an MTA wage freeze would have left its workers still doing better than the rest of us.

Had the MTA been able to hold average token-booth pay to the 2008 level of \$54,100 a year instead of watching it rise to \$58,400 over two years, it could have saved 32 jobs, where it's cutting 400.

Of other job titles that comprise the remaining 600 or so of the MTA's cuts, it could have saved 48, including:

- Subway cleaners: Had the MTA been able to hold wages to the 2008 average of \$44,000, it could have saved 20 jobs.

- Subway maintainers: Holding payroll to 2008 levels — \$65,200 — could have saved 19 jobs.

To put things in perspective: MTA chief Jay Walder said a few weeks back that keeping the booth clerks would've cost \$40,000 a day. But the rise in MTA wages from 2008 to 2009 works out to more than \$200,000 a day.



**NICOLE GELINAS**

It's simple. By paying workers modestly less — and still more than the market demands — the MTA could employ more people for the same amount of money.

That's not to say that the MTA can't stand some job cuts. The Post caught a couple of subway maintainers — Frank Ryan, who made \$63,900 in 2009, and Robert Malandrino, \$63,500 — clocking in last Thursday before driving off for a two-hour snooze.

But the same union contracts that protect Ryan and Malandrino also prevent the MTA from freezing wages. The Transport Workers Union did offer payroll concessions to save jobs a few weeks ago — but the union wanted a future no-lay-offs clause in return, too big a price.

Unless politicians are willing to stick up for the public (rather than supporting the union in backroom negotiations), the TWU will never accept economic reality.

At next week's public hearings, the public should remember: Any pol who stands up and criticizes the MTA without acknowledging that sops to unions have made more than half of the authority's budget impervious to easy cuts is taking you for a ride.

Nicole Gelinas is a contributing editor to the Manhattan Institute's City Journal.



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## MTA bows to union pressure, restores jobs

75¢ • NYDailyNews.com

SPAIN'S #1

14th Ave., RZ770 Saturday, July 10, 2010

### DAILY NEWS

# G.I.s back in bus-ness

Saturday, July 10, 2010

## MTA, under fire, finds jobs for 2 workers it axed

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

TWO BUS DRIVERS laid off while dodging bullets in Afghanistan and Iraq will be put back on the payroll, easing their worries on the homefront, the Daily News has learned.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority's about-face on the layoffs of Sgts. Alvin Taylor and Anddy Moreno comes in the wake of a series of Daily News articles about the servicemen being stripped of their MTA pay and benefits.

"It's very uplifting," Taylor told the News during a phone call from Afghanistan yesterday. "I'll be able to continue what I'm doing here with a free mind. I'll be able to concentrate on doing what I'm doing here to stay alive and not worry about having a job back home."

Taylor and Moreno were among the hundreds of bus drivers, mechanics and other workers laid off in recent weeks by NYC Transit, part of a plan to close an \$800 million budget gap.

The MTA will now put Taylor and Moreno on the payroll of MTA Bus, another authority division where there are vacancies.

Taylor, 55, of Midwood, Brooklyn, is serving with the Army Reserve in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where he provides security for mili-



**Sgts. Alvin Taylor (l.) and Anddy Moreno, who are fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq respectively, had been laid off but were given new jobs at the MTA.**

tary convoys. He was deployed to Afghanistan in February, just months after becoming a driver with NYC Transit, the MTA's biggest division.

Moreno, 37, a National Guardsman from the Bronx, is a supply soldier constantly on the move between bases and units in Iraq.

Last week, he told the News that he was "going nuts" because he was counting on his NYC Transit checks to help provide for his wife and three children.

Union officials praised the MTA's change of heart.

"I'm glad the MTA has realized that its military personnel deserve to be able to fight for their county without worrying about their well being at home or how their family or children will be supported without them being

there," Frank Austin, a division chairman with Transport Workers Union Local 100, said.

About 50 laid off NYC Transit drivers have accepted jobs at MTA Bus that have lower hourly pay rates.

Moreno and Taylor are expected to be put back on the NYC Transit payroll when positions open during the normal course of retirements.

In addition to the layoffs, MTA financial plans also include raising fare and toll revenues by 7.5% in January. The MTA is also drafting a proposal that would keep the one-way cash fare at \$2.25, increase the \$89 monthly MetroCard to about \$99 and the \$27 weekly card up to \$29.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION

OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## The Chief

Civil Service **LEADER**

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

Registered in U.S. Patent Office

An Independent Civil Service Newspaper

Established 1897



Audit Bureau of Circulations  
Member

Vol. CXIV, No. 18

July 16, 2010

## TWU Does the Right Thing

Transport Workers Union Local 100 board members deserve credit for approving a resolution under which union members would pay \$5 weekly over the next six months to help cover the health-care costs of colleagues who have been laid off in recent weeks as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's budget cuts.

Rank-and-file transit workers, who will have to vote in favor of the plan for it to take effect, should follow in the spirit of their board. It is because the union refused to give up or defer key benefits, including a pay raise, that the MTA went ahead with the layoffs. Those who were spared because they had greater seniority should be willing to make a relatively small sacrifice to assist those who lost their jobs.

Doing so will help build solidarity in the ranks, which is particularly important because there is a decent likelihood that at least half of those who were laid off could be recalled as vacancies arise that need to be filled. It also reinforces the strength of a union previously ripped apart by internal strife growing out of the consequences of the 2005 strike by making a statement that those fortunate enough to escape the ax appreciate the sacrifice others were forced to make to protect hard-won benefits.





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

July 16, 2010

### *Unneeded Monuments*

# What Ails MTA? Mega's And Their Debt Service



By MEL LEVY

My kids recently asked me a few interesting questions about the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. They wanted to know why the MTA is always crying poverty while it takes on these mega-construction projects. They could not understand how it could run a system without understanding what the purpose of the system is.

Dad, they said, isn't mass transit supposed to move people from point A to point B efficiently and in some degree of comfort? How can they do it when they cut service and lay off people? How come no politicians bring up these questions? Where is the media? Why aren't the unions protecting their workers' jobs?

These are good questions that I tried to answer. The answers are all tied together, similar to the Gordian Knot. The answer to the first one could lead to the answer to all.

In order to get its hands on a ton of money, the MTA (having learned from the Port Authority) created these mega (and unneeded) projects. Using money just to make what you do run better isn't sexy. People will want an accounting of how the money was spent. People will always ask why the Chairman makes \$350,000 per year when the President of the United States only gets \$400,000.

But if they can point to these monuments to their existence, people will look the other way. So what if they will not be done in your lifetime. So what if they will lose money (hundreds of millions per year) to run them? So what if their cost is way too high by design? The Port Authority did it (and gets away with it). And it isn't coming out of its pocket. This will be paid out of debt service, the same way people

pay three times the principal when they finally retire the mortgage of their house (30-year mortgage at 6 percent). Only in this case the principal will be 10 times the cost. Meaning the total cost could be a factor of 30.

Now what does this debt service do? It has to be paid. So they attach the system. You get a fare increase. Or you cut expenses by reducing service. Or a combination of both.

But notice the Chairman's compensation is NOT touched. No one even talks about it. Why not? Isn't the Chairman supposed to be a servant of the public? He is. Just not the public that uses his system. And (unlike the President) you can't throw him out. And if you do, he has a golden parachute kicker in his package.

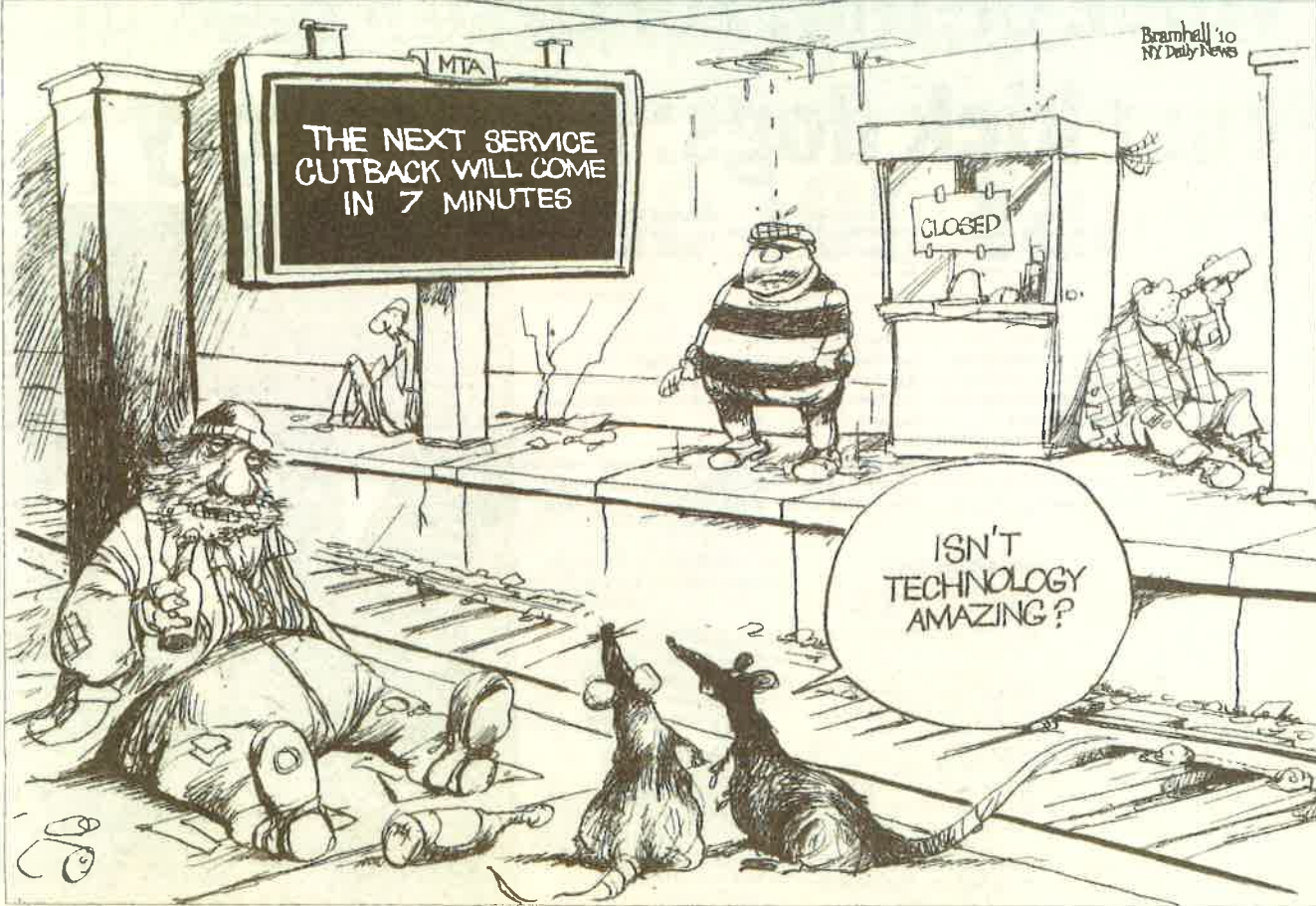
Meanwhile, people also lose their jobs during cutbacks. Negotiated raises are held back. For those who use (and are supported by) the system, this is called sharing the pain. But the Chairman's salary is sacrosanct and the mega-projects go on. Where are the people's guardians—the elected representatives, the media and the unions? Sadly, I had to tell my kids they have been found wanting.

If the MTA were run right, the mega-projects would stop and the deficits would become surpluses and the union people who operate the system would get their raises (without threats) and the fare could even be reduced, with an increase in service.

*Mr. Levy, a retired veteran of 35 years in the transit system who monitored the structural integrity of the subway system's below-river tunnels, is the former chairman of the Civil Service Technical Guild's New York City Transit chapter.*



## BRAMHALL'S WORLD



# It's the Afghan economy, stupid

**A**fghanistan may be back in the American conscience, but this is hardly good news. If anything, President Obama's much-needed focus on the campaign against the Taliban has outlined just how difficult the fight has become. Frustrated with what many are calling a quagmire, American commentators either advocate for withdrawing from Afghanistan or engaging in a more intense military campaign. These are both understandable responses, but even so, they are far from a complete remedy.

The war in Afghanistan is not being waged on the battlefield alone: If we are to emerge as a strong and independent democracy, the campaign for Afghanistan's economy must stand on equal footing with the counterinsurgency campaign. In fact, they are one and the same.

We can't build schools during firefights, but without schools, the firefights will continue. Yet a disproportionate amount of international resources — about 80% of aid provided by each contributing country — have been devoted to military operations at the cost of job creation and long-term economic development. But it is more jobs — not just more bullets — that will persuade militias to lay down their weapons.

Fortunately, Afghanistan is endowed with natural resources — copper, iron ore,

## BE OUR GUEST

BY M. ASHRAF HAIDARI

lithium — and can finance its own development, though only if the country receives the necessary investment and technical assistance from the international community. Although Afghanistan has some \$3 trillion worth of minerals, we lack the required transportation network to ship these resources.

Building the necessary infrastructure — railroads, highways, processing plants — will not only facilitate the mining industry but also create jobs. A sustainable livelihood, no matter how small, will immediately weaken the insurgency — and its base, a destitute populace — while a modern transportation network that links Afghanistan with its neighbors will spur long-term growth.

Drug production in Afghanistan is another key problem that can be addressed by economic development. We know from international experience that global demand for narcotics finds ready supply in nations where governance is weak, instability high and poverty rampant. But if Afghanistan's agriculture sector is revitalized, fewer farmers will rely on opium harvesting — a dangerous enterprise to begin with — to make a

living. Instead, they could grow wheat, pomegranates, saffron and other high-value crops. As agribusiness becomes profitable and sustainable, it will drive down the cost of food for Afghanistan's poor and raise rural incomes, which should in turn further weaken the insurgency in crucial provinces like Helmand and Kandahar.

Energy is another factor pivotal to earning the trust of Afghans. Without a comprehensive electricity grid, Afghanistan can hardly achieve a productive economy. The availability of electricity can open an incredibly large market for electronic goods, drastically expanding consumer consumption. Just as importantly, the Afghan people could finally reap the benefits of a globalized world through use of the Internet, to which only 3% of the population currently has access.

Further, corruption can be stemmed when the abuse of power is no longer necessary as a means of economic uplift. Corruption is a symptom, not a cause, of weak governance, which can only be strengthened when Afghan civil servants are thoroughly trained and paid competitive salaries on a sustainable basis. Right now, a driver at an international NGO or a United Nations agency earns at least five times

more than a civil servant working for the Afghan government. Nor can this situation be improved unless resources are channeled away from aid organizations — too many to count, really — directly toward restructuring the Afghan government into an efficient apparatus of resource allocation.

Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. John Bolton recently argued in the *Los Angeles Times* that "religious fanatics, and their grievances, do not arise from poverty or deprivation." To the contrary, many Taliban fighters join the insurgency simply to earn a living. A significant number of these "rented" Taliban can be made

## Jobs and development will defeat the Taliban

to turn swords into plowshares if they are given alternative opportunities.

American security is closely tied to the nascent Afghan economy. Without stability, the Taliban will continue to enjoy widespread support — and a base from which to attack American interests.

But if America relies on military might alone, how will the outcome in Afghanistan differ from that of U.S. forces in Vietnam, the French in Algeria or the Soviets in Afghanistan? Militaries alone simply cannot defeat insurgencies.

*Haidari is the political counselor of the Embassy of Afghanistan in Washington, D.C.*



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

July 23, 2010 |

## The Chief

*Want Loan Modifications Fixed*

# Mortgage Nightmares Spur Liu, Unions to Dun Banks

By **ARI PAUL**

Teacher Jamie Fidler thought she had her mortgage problem solved.

In August 2009, the mother of one, after struggling to make the monthly payments on her Sunset Park home even after taking in a tenant, applied for Bank of America's loan modification program.

"I was told that we fit the criteria for the program, and that we should be hearing within 90 days," she recalled.

### Sorry, Wrong Program

She constantly followed up on her case, and each time a bank representative told her that everything was in order, and that she just "needed to wait." But then in October, a BoA representative called to tell her that she had applied to the wrong program and that she needed to reapply for "The Obama Modification Program."

"I was shocked that no one from the bank had informed me of this earlier," Ms. Fidler said. "We reluctantly re-submitted all of our paperwork, and again waited."

As she waited, she continued to pay the mortgage in full while trying to follow up on her case. Each time she got on the phone, she entered a Kafkaesque maze in which she could not speak to the same person more than once, get anyone's name, or be transferred to the person working on her application.

Then things got worse. Despite paying in full each month, the bank's records falsely stated that Ms. Fidler and her husband had been in arrears, lowering their credit score. She constantly told bank representatives that her own bank records showed that she had paid, putting her on a merry-go-round in which she repeatedly had to provide more paperwork without getting the problem solved.

It's stories like this that have

prompted City Comptroller John C. Liu and labor leaders to push banks to come together and work on "creative solutions" to fix loan-modification programs so that homeowners don't get lost in the system.

### Let's Work Together

During a press conference July 14, Mr. Liu said he was calling for a meeting with the city's largest lenders, among them HSBC, Citibank, and Bank of America. He said this was not meant to "assign blame but [to] bring

the parties together," adding that it would help to stem the rise of foreclosures in the city.

Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen was less conciliatory, saying that the banks must reform their modification practices because of a debt they owed to workers they "took advantage of."

"Because you profited handsomely, it is now time for you to pay back the workers that you profited off of," Mr. Samuelsen said.



The Chief-Leader/Pat Arnov

**REINING IN THE BANKS:** Teacher Jamie Fidler recalls her struggle with Bank of America after she and her husband applied for a mortgage modification program, during a press conference with labor leaders and City Comptroller John C. Liu (behind her) announcing their intention to sit down with banks to develop ways to reduce foreclosure rates in the city.





**GEEKS GOT VIOLENT  
THIS YEAR  
COMIC-CON** (page 14)

# QUITTING?

**HOW TO DO IT  
WITH CLASS** (page 10)

**CORGAN MAKES A  
SMASHING NEW VOW  
MUSIC** (page 12)



# metro



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# Cuts open door for Wall St. dollar van

▶ Privately-run commuter vans picking up slack from MTA's eliminated bus routes ▶ City wants to increase offerings of legit vans, but illegal ones abound

(page 02)



▶ Riders board a van run by Mario's Transportation that will take them from the Financial District to the Upper East Side.

News

## Geithner: Let tax cut for rich die

▶ Treasury secretary says there won't be a double-dip recession ▶ Ending break will help budget deficits (page 06)

## Mets end long trip as big losers

Return home in third place after pathetic 2-9 start to second half (page 17)



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BP CEO Tony Hayward may be stepping down. Is it the right move, or should he have to face the consequences of the Gulf oil disaster?

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**ASHLEY MADISON.COM**

The website that's launching a  
**Sexual Revolution**

SEE PAGE 8 ▶

# MTA on wrong track

Handicapped say 20 years after ADA, new subway and bus cuts are making it difficult to travel the city

This week marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, but many say MTA service cuts are a step backward for disabled riders.

Eliminating interborough bus service, replacing wheelchair-accessible buses with privately-run and inaccessible commuter vans and cuts to the Access-A-Ride program for the elderly and disabled are all making it more difficult for disabled riders to get around the city, said Edith Prentiss, a Washington Heights resident who uses a wheelchair.

"The MTA is setting out to totally dismantle accessible transportation," Prentiss said. "It's getting bad."

## ADA compliance?

The MTA is required to make 100 of its 468 stations ADA-compliant by 2020. It will cost the MTA \$1.43 billion to make the stations accessible with elevators and ramps:

- ▶ Completed: 73
- ▶ In construction phase: 8
- ▶ In design phase: 8
- ▶ In planning phase: 11

With the elimination of the B51 and B39 buses, which connect Manhattan to Brooklyn, many wheelchair users have found it impossible to use the subway as an alternative.

"Your choice is to wheel across the Brooklyn

Bridge," Prentiss said.

"It's not just wheelchair users," Paula Wolff, president of Disabled in Action, noted. "Even someone who has a heart condition or severe asthma can't go up subway stairs."

New York City's bus fleet was the first in the world to become 100 percent accessible, but it is difficult to make the entire aging subway system ADA-compliant, said an MTA spokesperson.

Two different disabled groups filed lawsuits against the MTA, saying the bus cuts are against laws requiring equal treatment.

**CARLY BALDWIN**  
carly.baldwin@metro.us



▶ Paula Wolff at an ADA celebration yesterday complained about Access-A-Ride's reliability. "People have lost jobs because Access-A-Ride is so late," Wolff said.

## Schumer: Keep the transit tax

NEW YORK. With the federal mass transit tax break set to expire this year, Sen. Chuck Schumer called yesterday to make the perk permanent. It allows commuters to use up to \$230 per month in pre-tax wages for mass transit — up from \$120 in 2009. ● METRO/AZ

## Rep. Rangel seeks support

NEW YORK. After being charged with ethics violations, Rep. Charles Rangel spent the weekend in Harlem drumming up support from his constituents and the Congressional Black Caucus. Resigning would be "un-American," he said. ● METRO/AZ

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1

# Dollar vans thrive in wake of bus cuts

► Upper East Siders flock to cheap transportation option in the Financial District ► Industry growing citywide ► So is crackdown from authorities



► People load up into Mario's Wall Street van service last week.

## Green light for commuter vans

To fill the vacuum left by MTA bus cuts, TLC Commissioner David Yassky launched a pilot program this month sanctioning commuter vans along five former bus routes: the B23, B71, B39, Q74 and the Q79. Drivers have to abide by rules, such as not picking up hailing customers — which many dollar vans currently do.

● METRO/CS

### In the news

## Bronx church blaze

A Bronx church destroyed by a fire yesterday morning held prayers in its steamy parking lot and vowed to rebuild. The four-alarm fire tore through Love Gospel Assembly in Fordham, leaving five firefighters and three others with minor injuries.

● METRO/AZ

### In the news



"['Jersey Shore'] takes a bunch of New Yorkers, drops them at the Jersey Shore and tries to make America feel like this is New Jersey."

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie yesterday on ABC's "This Week"

### Quoted

**"For every one legal van out there, there are probably two more illegal ones."**

JUAN PEREZ, WRECK COMPANY, HIGHRISE OUTDOOR, SELLS ADS ON DOLLAR VANS

It's not exactly the Hamptons' Jitney, but Mario's van has become this summer's hot ride for Upper East Siders commuting to Wall Street.

"Dollar" vans, long popular on Brooklyn's Flatbush and Utica avenues or in subway-less stretches of Eastern Queens, ferrying riders for a quick (and often illegal) buck have been undergoing a boom in the wake of MTA cuts. Since

the elimination of the X90 express bus last month, dozens of Upper East Siders have been squeezing into Mario's for the \$5 ride to Financial District jobs.

But the largely underground dollar van industry (most charge \$2) has been attracting more attention from authorities. The city already shut down TransportAzumah vans along the X90 route and two other axed bus lines, saying the

company wasn't authorized. The titans of Wall Street, applauding private enterprise for stepping in where the MTA has failed, want the city to step aside.

"I prefer the bus — it's far more comfortable, there were seat belts; there weren't broken armrests," said Delia Peters, an attorney, who takes the 15-minute ride to 74th Street on Mario's, which the Taxi and Limousine Commis-

sion said was legit. "But this is a service that's preferable to anything else that's being offered. The city is stranding passengers."

"There is definitely demand," said Joel Azumah of TransportAzumah. "Commuters along gener corridors have been abandoned."

● CARLY BALDWIN  
carly.baldwin@metro.us

## SI suicide note was mother's

The handwriting on a charred note saying "am sorry" uncovered in the ashes of the Staten Island fire that killed a mother and her four children last

week doesn't appear to belong to the teenage son police suspected of setting the blaze and slaying his two sisters and himself.

It matches the writing found in mom Leisa Jones' diary, NYPD spokesman Paul Browne said yesterday.

Earlston Raymond, who lives in Jamaica and hadn't

seen his son, C.J., 14, in nearly seven years, told the New York Post he didn't believe his son was responsible. "If anybody could've done it, it would've been the mother because of her temper," Raymond said.

The investigation is ongoing, police said.

● METRO/AZ

### Weather. Storms



► Severe thunderstorms blew through the area yesterday, leaving thousands without power.

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## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

# DAILY NEWS

Wednesday, July 28, 2010

# TWU is Crow-ing as London transit strike leader joins fray

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

MTA CHAIRMAN Jay Walder will see a familiar face at MTA headquarters this morning — a union leader from London who waged a transit strike when Walder was an executive there.

Bob Crow, general secretary of the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, is in the city for an international conference on workers' safety.

But he's also huddled with Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen, advising the bus and subway workers' leader how to combat MTA

layoffs and efforts to wrest concessions from his workers.

Crow yesterday said he planned on attending a rally outside MTA headquarters on Madison Ave. this morning and address the board inside at its monthly meeting.

When Walder was the finance and planning director for transport for London, Crow led a strike of his transit workers. The struggles of working men and women are the same on both sides of the pond, Crow said.

Service cuts, fare hikes, layoffs, wage freezes and reduced benefits pressed by officials and corporate leaders amount to "financial fascism," he said.

"The working people in general, not one of them contributed one iota to the recession ... and the bankers are walking away scot-free, still getting their bonuses, share dividends, and the public sector workers are expected to pay for it," he said.

Strikes by transit workers aren't illegal in England, where walkouts and strike threats are common.

Strikes by transit workers are illegal in New York. But at the end of the day, Crow said, the only real clout workers have is "withholding their labor."

"Trade unions were born out of illegality," he said.

[pdonohue@nydailynews.com](mailto:pdonohue@nydailynews.com)



TWU President John Samuelsen (left) meets with Bob Crow, his British equivalent, at P.J. Clarke's on the upper West Side. Crow went up against current MTA boss Jay Walder in London. Photo by Craig Warga/Daily News

# Her killer assets

## Beauty's hi-tech scopes for assassins, say pros

BY EDGAR SANDOVAL in Plano, Tex.  
and SAMUEL GOLDSMITH  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

**HIGH-TECH SCOPES** a young beauty tried to smuggle onto a Moscow-bound plane at Kennedy Airport are designed to help soldiers take out the enemy from a mile away.

Latvian-born lovely Anna Fermanova told federal agents she bought the three night-vision scopes for her husband's hunting pals in Russia.

Gun experts said yesterday her story doesn't make sense.

"These are used specifically for an assassination," said security consultant Bo Diel, a former NYPD detective. "You're not going to hunt deer with a super scope. That's crazy."

"You could take someone out with one of these scopes in the dead of night from up to a mile-and-a-half-away," he said. "I have friends in Iraq who use these. These are the real deal."

Dan Wasserbly, a weapons expert with Jane's International Defence Review, said the \$7,000 Raptor 4X Night Vision Weapons Sight that Fermanova had is so advanced the average U.S. soldier wouldn't use one.

And it's used for automatic assault weapons, not hunting rifles. "It's a piece of serious military hardware," he said.

Fermanova, 24, was arrested July 15, four months after she tried to get past airport security with the scopes concealed in a pair of Uggs buried deep in her suitcase, authorities said.

Her lawyer, Scott Palmer, said his client was told they were needed for hunting. "If it was intended for other uses, she was not aware," he said.

The feds trained their sights on Fermanova after a confidential informant told them she was in the market for heavy-duty weapon parts, court documents said. A law-enforcement official said her arrest is part of an ongoing investigation into arms trading.

Palmer said his client will likely plead not guilty to knowingly trying to export controlled weapons when she appears in Brooklyn Federal Court in August. The charge carries 10 years.

Fermanova is under house arrest at her parents' home outside Dallas and would not come to the door yesterday.

A former cosmetology student, she offered this credo in a high school yearbook quote: "Dance like no one is watching, work like you don't need the money, and love as if you've never been hurt!"

Neighbor John Taylor, 76, said he doesn't think she's an arms dealer.

"She's a pretty girl," Taylor said. "I don't think [Russians] need her to get something they sell over there."

With John Marzulli  
sgoldsmith@nydailynews.com



### EYE THE SPIES

Russian-spy photos at  
NYDailyNews.com/  
national

Alleged weapons smuggler Anna Fermanova seems like an all-American girl in Facebook shots.

## Everyone will hurt - but not MTA boss

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

**THE MTA IS** laying off workers and raising fares, but MTA Chairman Jay Walder said yesterday he won't trim his \$350,000-a-year salary.

Believing from the public speakers' podium at an MTA meeting, a union leader challenged Walder to share in the pain by taking a pay cut.

"Step up," Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuels challenged. "Go after your own paycheck."

Walder didn't respond to the chief of the bus and subway workers' union, who makes \$105,000. But he rejected the suggestion when asked by reporters later.

"The position of the chairman of the MTA has been compensated historically in the manner in which I'm being compensated. I think that's the way it will remain," he said.

The chairman's salary came up as the MTA board voted to lay off another 210 token booth clerks, bringing this year's job cuts to about 3,400.

The board also authorized public hearings on a plan to raise fare and toll revenues by 7.5%, a level the MTA, Gov. Paterson and the state Legislature agreed upon during funding negotiations last year.

The MTA lost about \$900 million in anticipated revenues in large part because of state funding cuts and declining tax revenues, officials said.

"This is not a situation that we've created," Walder said. "It's a situation occurring because our subsidies have not been there and money has been taken from us by the state."

An MTA spokesman pointed out the agency is not asking union workers to take pay cuts and has frozen administrative salaries, including Walder's. An arbitrator granted transit workers a 4% raise last year and this year.

Meanwhile, NYC Transit will soon seek funding to place new, more visible intercoms every 150 feet on subway platforms and elsewhere in subway stations, officials said.

NYC Transit's Tom Prendergast said he'll make the funding request within 40 days.

Prendergast brought up the plan after some board members expressed concern riders would have more difficulty getting assistance stemming from the layoffs of token booth clerks and the closing of more than 80 booths and informational kiosks to cut labor costs.

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## Pipe blast vic mum on Con Ed deal My pol's gotta go, say most in poll

A TOW-TRUCK driver who was grievously burned when a steam pipe exploded in midtown three years ago has settled his lawsuit against Con Edison.

Lawyers for Gregory McCullough, 24, and the utility company filed court papers yesterday saying he dropped the case, without indicating the amount of the settlement.

McCullough was caught in the July 18, 2007, blast at the corner of E. 41st St. and Lexington Ave. that erupted when a leaky under-

ground pipe shot out a geyser of steam and rubble.

The CUNY student was burned over 80% of his body and spent weeks in a coma, followed by months of grueling physical therapy.

His passenger, a 30-year-old mom, was also badly burned. A 51-year-old woman fleeing the explosion died of a heart attack.

McCullough did not return a call. His lawyer declined to comment, as did Con Ed.

Adam Lisberg

ALBANY - State of shame, indeed.

Things have gotten so bad at the Capitol that more than half of New Yorkers say it's time for their own state senators to go, a new poll shows.

The Quinnipiac University survey also found that voters - by a whopping 75% to 20% margin - believe state government is dysfunctional.

But more surprising is how voters view their own lawmakers.

Traditionally, voters have been critical of the Legislature but like their own representatives.

No longer. By a 53% to 35% margin, New Yorkers say their own state senator should be swept out of office. In the Assembly, voters by a 49% to 33% margin say their rep should go.

"If I were in the Legislature, I would be ants about this," Quinnipiac pollster Maurice Carroll said. "Some people are going to get knocked off." **Kenneth Lovett**



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## The Chief

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Vol. CXIV, No. 20

July 30, 2010

### TWU Shows Its Concern

*To the Editor:*

I read Ari Paul's story (July 16 issue) on how the executive board of Transport Workers Union Local 100 has approved a measure to have working members pay \$5 per week for six months in order to subsidize health-care plans for members laid off by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

I congratulate the executive board of TWU Local 100. They are absolutely doing the "right thing" in asking their membership to help laid-off members.

I am retired and was never a TWU member, but all civil-service unions should show the same concern for members who lose their positions due to this current economy.

**ED RUDY**

**Retired Chief Inspector,  
Department of Housing  
Preservation and Development**





# Union fights foreclosures with coalition

By **ALFREDO ALVARADO**

As foreclosures escalate, DC 37 lawyers are working to save individual members from losing their homes to the banks and the union and a community-labor coalition are fighting to make the banks help address the crisis.

Foreclosures in New York City rose 16 percent in the first quarter of 2010 compared to the same period in 2009, according to the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at New York University. But the largest banks, which got billions of dollars in federal bailouts, have stalled on modifying mortgages to let families stay in their homes.

"The banks prosper while these families suffer," said DC 37 Executive Director Lillian Roberts. "The value of nearby proper-

ties falls and whole communities are devastated."

The coalition led by Comptroller John C. Liu demanded in July that the city's major banks get serious about making modifications, speed up the process and freeze foreclosures when people apply to ease the burdens of their mortgages. The coalition announced its proposals at a news conference July 14, with Associate Director Oliver Gray speaking for DC 37.

The unions involved — DC 37, the largest public-employee council in the United States, the teachers, transit workers, hotel employees and Service



Local 1321 member Roma Ramdhna and her family were one of the many families that received assistance from MELS in helping to get their mortgage modified.

Employees Local 32 BJ — represent over 500,000 working families. They didn't publicly threaten to withdraw their huge pension investments from the banks, but the potential for such action was clear. By Sept. 1, the banks agreed to begin meeting with Liu and the coalition on ways to save more New Yorkers from foreclosure.

When Local 1321 member Roma Ramdhna and her husband, Narmil Singh, tried to get their mortgage modified last year, they got the kind of bank runaround the coalition is fighting to end.

After Singh's hours as a limousine driver were cut drastically, they fell \$13,000

behind on their mortgage. After dozens of telephone calls, the WAMU bank, which had been taken over by JPMorgan Chase, referred her to offices in Florida and Arizona. Several times, the bank demanded documents she had already submitted.

"I was extremely frustrated with the whole process," said Ramdhna, a Clerical Supervisor at the Queens Borough Public Library, who got help from DC 37's Municipal Employees Legal Services.

MELS attorneys Katesha Scarbrough and Rashana Cain had the loan extended from 30 to 40 years with the interest rate cut to 2 percent for the first five years.



Leading new coalition pressing banks to help in foreclosure crisis, from left, TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen, DC 37 Associate Director Oliver Gray, Local 1199 President George Gresham, the Rev. Dr. Herbert Daughtry, UFT President Michael Mulgrew and New York City Comptroller John Liu.



[Back to MTA 2010 Press Releases](#)

Press Release

July 28th, 2010

MTA Press Office  
(212) 878-7440

IMMEDIATE  
#24

## MTA Releases 2011 Preliminary Budget and Four-Year Financial Plan

### *Unprecedented Internal Cost Cutting Limits Fare Increase to Agreed 7.5% and Protects Service Quality; MTA's Financial Picture Remains Fragile with Many Risks; Labor Participation Critical to Plan*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today released its 2011 Preliminary Budget and proposed Four-Year Financial Plan for 2011-2014. The proposed plan reflects unprecedented internal cost cutting initiatives undertaken in response to a \$900 million shortfall for 2010 resulting from cuts to State assistance and dramatic downturns in tax revenue. These shortfalls amount to more than \$2.5 billion over the plan period. As a result of its cost-cutting actions, the MTA was able to limit the fare revenue increase to 7.5% in 2011, as agreed to with the Governor and Legislature in May 2009 as part of the MTA rescue package. The Plan faces many risks, however, including the need for labor participation to control wage and benefit costs. The July Plan is preliminary; the MTA Board will consider a final Plan in December.

The Plan relies on three key components. The first is the continuation and expansion of the MTA's cost-cutting initiatives, which have saved more than \$380 million in 2010, translating into more than \$500 million in annual recurring savings and growing to more than \$700 million by 2014. The second key to the Plan is controlling labor costs, which make up 2/3 of the MTA's operating expenses. The Plan acknowledges that in the current economic situation wage increases must be tied to productivity gains or other cost savings. The Plan therefore assumes that all employees – both represented and non-represented – would receive a "net-zero" wage increase for two years. Finally, the Plan includes the 7.5% increases in fare and toll revenue in 2011 and 2013 agreed upon with the Governor and Legislature as part of the MTA rescue package approved last spring, which also included a series of new taxes to support the MTA and funding for the first two years of the MTA's 2010-2014 Capital Program.

"The foundation of this Plan is the most aggressive and comprehensive overhaul in the history of the MTA," said Jay H. Walder, Chairman and CEO of the MTA. "These actions have allowed us to hold true to our commitment regarding fare increases while maintaining the quantity and quality of service that New Yorkers rely on every day. The State's ongoing fiscal crisis is one of many risks to the Plan, but with continued hard work and the participation of our labor unions I believe that this Plan can be achieved."

The MTA was able to eliminate its 2010 deficit through a series of management actions, including:

- Eliminating more than 3,400 administrative and operating positions through layoffs, voluntary separations and elimination of vacant positions
- Freezing pay for management employees
- Increasing efficiency of paratransit and Bridge and Tunnel operations
- Reducing use of overtime
- Eliminating or deferring projects
- Consolidating functions
- Renegotiating contracts with vendors
- More efficiently managing inventories

These actions, the initial stages of a continuing effort to fundamentally overhaul the way the MTA does business, will mean recurring savings of more than \$500 million in 2011, rising to \$700 million in 2014.

Despite these savings, the Financial Plan remains subject to risks that could mean additional difficulties. The plan assumes that the health of the economy does not deteriorate significantly, and that the taxes that are collected by New York State in the MTA's name are paid to the MTA. Regardless, additional reductions will need to be identified through labor savings, as noted, and through elimination of shortfalls to subsidies for Long Island Bus.

#### Labor

Controlling wage and benefit costs have a critical role to play in stabilizing the MTA's finances. Wages, benefits and other personnel expenses account for 2/3 of MTA operating expenses. This financial plan assumes that each new labor contract will not impose any additional financial burden on the MTA for two years. This is intended as a clear statement that the MTA cannot afford to allow salary, wage and fringe benefit costs to rise in ways unconnected to productivity and the regional economy's ability to support the system. This, however, does not preclude the possibility of wage increases based on bankable productivity improvements or contributions to benefit costs. Consistent with this "net zero" labor initiative, non-represented employees will not receive a cost of living raise in 2010, which will be the second of two consecutive years without an increase.

#### MTA Long Island Bus

The MTA proposed budget assumes that Nassau County will fully fund its obligation to support Long Island Bus. Under a 1973 lease agreement, the MTA operates the system as a contractor working on behalf of the County, which owns the bus system. Through 1999, the County made up 100% of its funding obligation. But since 2000, when the County dramatically cut back its assistance for this service, the MTA has been forced to shoulder an increasing share of this cost, totaling \$140 million. The MTA can no longer afford to subsidize this service, which would cost the MTA more than \$25 million in 2011.

# MTA ROLLER COASTER

Foresees no cuts in service, but will hike fares, tolls & freeze pay

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

THE MTA SAYS it can avoid further service cuts for four years — but riders and transit workers will still be in for a bumpy ride.

Transit officials today will officially unveil a four-year financial plan that includes fare and toll hikes in January and again in 2013.

Transit workers would see their pay frozen for two years unless they agree to work rule changes or other concessions covering the cost of raises.

Officials concede the plan has its share of risks and uncertainties, like the performance of the economy, levels of state funding and the ability of labor and management to find middle ground in contract negotiations.

The leader of Transport Workers Local 100, the bus and subway workers' union, immediately sounded a battle cry.

"The time has come that unions representing workers across the MTA unify and launch a comprehensive fight back," Local 100 President John Samuelsen said, blasting Metropolitan Transportation Authority Chairman Jay Walder as an "anti-union boss."

MTA executives will present the four-year plan to the authority board at its monthly meeting today.

The board is expected to authorize public hearings in September on just the 2011 fare and toll hike

proposals, part of next year's preliminary \$12 billion budget.

The 2011 proposals include either capping the number of trips on the 30-day MetroCard at 90 while raising the price \$10 to \$99 — or charging \$104 for unlimited rides.

The base subway-bus fare would remain \$2.25 except for riders buying one-way paper tickets in the subways, who would pay \$2.50. Under the plan, the Pay-Per-Ride bonus would drop to 7% from 15%.

The hikes would raise fare and toll revenues by 7.5%, a level agreed upon by the MTA, Gov. Paterson and the state Legislature in negotiations over state funding last year.

Since last fall, the MTA has lost about \$900 million in expected revenues, largely because of lower tax revenues and subsidies, officials said.

The agency responded in part by curbing overtime, freezing non-union salaries and cutting about 3,200 administrative and operating positions, many through layoffs and service cuts.

"By implementing the most aggressive cost cutting in the history of the MTA, we've been able to bring our budget into balance and maintain the agreed upon level of fare increase," MTA spokesman Jeremy Soffin said.

"There are many risks ahead, though, and the plan will only succeed if our labor unions work with us to address budget shortfalls."

pdonohue@nydailynews.com



## ON TRACK TO PAY MORE

The MTA's preliminary 2011 budget includes the following proposed fare hikes and changes:

### FOR SUBWAYS AND BUSES:

- **Base fare:** Will remain \$2.25, but rise to \$2.50 if buying a one-way paper ticket for subways.
- **Pay-Per-Ride MetroCard:** The 15% bonus will be cut to 7%.
- **EasyPayXPress MetroCard:** The 15% bonus will be cut to 7%.
- **One-day Fun Pass:** eliminated.
- **14-day unlimited ride MetroCard:** eliminated.
- **Seven-day unlimited ride MetroCard:** either a 22-trip limit for \$28 or unlimited trips for \$29.

- **30-day MetroCard:** either a 90-trip limit for \$99, or unlimited trips for \$104.

- **\$1 surcharge on new MetroCard purchases** beginning summer 2011. Surcharge avoidable by refilling money-based card or renewing time-based cards.

### FOR METRO-NORTH AND LIRR RAILROADS:

- **Average ticket increase** between 7.6% and 9.4%, depending on type and zone.
- **WebTicket discount:** eliminated.
- **Mail & Ride ticket discount:** eliminated for monthly ticket,

reduced for joint ticket/MetroCard.

- **One-way ticket only valid for seven days,** down from six months. Ten-trip packages valid for 90 days, down from one year.
- **Refunds:** \$15 charge for refunds.

### TOLLS:

- **Verrazano Bridge** (one-way tolling): \$12, up from \$11.
- **Major crossings, like Bronx-Whitestone:** \$6, up from \$5.50.
- **Minor crossings, like Marine Parkway:** \$3, up from \$2.75.
- **E-2Pass:** 10% increase.

SOURCE: MTA

## TWU is Crow-ing as London transit strike leader joins fray

BY PETE DONOHUE  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

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pdonohue@nydailynews.com



MTA President John Samuelsen (left) meets with Bob Crow, his British equivalent, at P.J. Clarke's on the upper West Side. Crow went up against current MTA boss Jay Walder in London. Photo by Craig Wurga/Daily News

DAILY NEWS

EDITORIAL

# The big con job & ...

**T**he fraudulent budget that state lawmakers are planning to pass today marks a new low in fiscal irresponsibility, even by Albany's barrel-scraping standards.

Forced by Gov. Paterson to take action, but too spineless to make hard choices in closing a massive deficit, the cowards are going for Plan C — scam the taxpayers.

Paterson presented the Legislature with a reasonable plan for resolving the crisis. But his fellow Democrats, led by Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Senate Democratic Conference chief John Sampson responded by adding lots of spending while subtracting revenue.

The numbers don't balance. Not even close. Again, this is a scam — a con job born of political desperation.

Lawmakers are simply saying no to Paterson's recommended cuts to school aid, tuition assistance and homeless shelters, and adding back hundreds of millions of dollars the state can't afford.

And because the liquor store lobby squawked about Paterson's plan to let grocery stores sell wine — a no-brainer that would benefit consumers while raising much-needed cash — they just say no to that, too, digging the state's fiscal hole even deeper.

And because public sector unions loathe the concept of imposing a limit on local property tax hikes, Silver and Sampson have thrown out Paterson's tax cap.

And because the Legislature loves to extend its reach through every aspect of state government, Silver and Sampson reject Paterson's attempt to reform the finances of the state and city universities to give students a general idea as to future tuition costs.

Keep in mind that even the governor's plan was shakily balanced — counting, for instance, on more than \$1 billion in Medicaid money that Congress hasn't approved.

Paterson has tried to compel the Legislature to act responsibly by stuffing long-term spending cuts and tax hikes into emergency spending bills necessary to keep the state running. In effect, he forced lawmakers to choose between taking political lumps or shutting the state down.

The last step in that process was due today, when lawmakers faced a take-it-or-turn-out-the-lights vote. To duck that moment of truth, Silver, Sampson & Co. exercised constitutional prerogatives to amend Paterson's budget bills from January — a process they should have gone through before the March 31 deadline for budget action.

They're leaving Paterson no choice but to sharpen his veto pen and cut away every last dollar of extra spending — which, by the way, will likely leave schools and other programs with less money than Paterson was willing to spend, had lawmakers done what he asked them to do.

They have no shame.

# ... the great train robbery

**A**lready the subways are dirtier, and starting today many will be slower in coming. They'll also be more crowded — as will many buses — at least on those routes on which service has not been eliminated.

This is an outrage. Its perpetrators are the officials who have held sway in Albany, spending ever more billions of dollars yet never properly attending to the delivery of basic, vital services.

Mass transit is the very lifeblood of New York. It should be among the last of the services chosen for sacrifice in tough times — not the very first.

Yet Gov. Paterson, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Senate Democratic Conference chief John Sampson, Senate Republican Minority Leader Dean Skelos and overwhelming majorities in both houses put subway, bus and commuter rail service at the head of the line for chopping.

That New York is in tough times is no excuse.

MTA revenues from dedicated taxes have plummeted in the national economic downturn. Albany worsened the picture in December by siphoning \$143 million from that dwindling money flow to cover the state's expenses.

Here's that \$143 million in perspective: The amount is \$50 million more than the \$93 million the MTA hopes to save by eliminating the V and W subway lines; rerouting the M; shortening service on the G; running fewer trains especially at night and on weekends, and forcing longer waits on 3 million riders a day, and eliminating 37 of 244 bus routes.

Had Paterson, Silver, Sampson and Skelos kept their hands off MTA funding these cuts could have been avoided. They could have found cash elsewhere — say by relinquishing the Legislature's pork-barrel member items or by extending pension reform to the MTA workforce.

Paterson deserves the least blame. He has been working in a Capitol where too many lawmakers

cover from closing a \$9.2 billion deficit or pretend that it doesn't exist.

Only recently has he found the strategy to force action by giving the Legislature bills that have a drop-dead choice: Vote yes or shut down the government. The big showdown will take place as riders stew today.

What these lawmakers excel at is deceiving their constituents.

The MTA's service area is represented by 142 members of the Assembly and Senate. Fully 64 of them wrote letters, testified or issued statements railing about planned transit cuts after voting to cut the MTA's funding.

They had the gall to posture as champions of a furious public. Each of these weasels must be held to account. Here are all of their names in alphabetic order.

Assembly: Marc Alessi, Carmen Arroyo, Michael Benedetto, Michael Benjamin, Jonathan Bing, Richard Brodsky, Alec Brook-Kransy, Karim Camara, Nelson Castro, Barbara Clark, William Colton, Vivian Cook, Marcos Crespo, Michael Cusick, Steven Cymbrowitz, Michael DenDekker, Jeffrey Dinowitz, Vanessa Gibson, Richard Gottfried, Carl Heastie, Andrew Hevesi, Janele Hyer-Spencer, Rhoda Jacobs, Ellen Jaffee, Brian Kavanagh, Micah Kellner, Rory Lancman, Joseph Lentol, Margaret Markey, Grace Meng, Michael Miller, Joan Millman, Cathy Nolan, Audrey Pfeffer, Adam Clayton Powell, Peter Rivera, Linda Rosenthal, William Scarborough, Michelle Schimel, Sheldon Silver, Michael Spano, Fred Thiele, Matthew Titone, Michele Titus, Harvey Weisenberg, David Weprin, Kenneth Zebrowski.

Senate: Eric Adams, Pedro Espada, Chuck Fuschillo, Marty Golden, Shirley Huntley, Craig Johnson, Jeff Klein, Liz Krueger, Ken LaValle, Carl Marcellino, Velnanette Montgomery, George Onorato, Jose Peralta, Bill Perkins, Diane Savino, Jose Serrano, Toby Ann Stavisky.

# Where elephants get their...

**T**hose in the GOP leadership are never shy about calling anyone with whom they disagree no more than left-wing slime. And if those critical of its stances in absolute defense of big business happen to be Republicans, we can almost be sure that there will be no acknowledgment of them.

The elephants, had they any kind of democratic sense of American politics, might assert their own solutions to the problems of clean energy. That is what we would expect had the elephants ever given any serious thoughts to the matter.

But, as usual, there are other things going on and that move us past all of the bluster and the stereotypical positions that never fail to dominate such disputes.

These things are known as actual ideas — and they have already appeared in a bipartisan form that I wrote about recently.

Democratic Sen. Maria Cantwell and Republican Sen. Susan Collins drafted a clean energy bill last December that addresses all of the problems facing our nation if it is to move past oil to renewable energy that the nation can afford. There is a short article in the Washington Post written on June 18 by the two senators, and an even shorter explanation on YouTube.

The basic idea is similar to "cap and trade" — which would set overall limits on carbon emissions — but without the "trade" part. Instead, the government would return most of the revenue raised back to consumers in the form of a dividend. A typical family of four would get about \$1,100 annually in payments.

As much fun as both Keith Olbermann and Rachel Maddow have pointing out the hypocrisy, lies and easily refuted denials of right-wing rabble rousers, we should be able to expect that both they and other liberal television editorialists would bring the two female senators on air to talk about what they have drafted. It is an addition of fresh air to the halitosis dominating the wind storms of hot air in Washington.

To my knowledge, this has yet

## State Cro

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## GOP idea deserve me attention

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## DAILY NEWS

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**EDITORIAL**

What the adjustment in test scores teaches us about city schools  
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Democrats depressed about their election prospects need to buck up — and grow a backbone  
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**YOUR VOICES**

Readers on Chelsea Clinton's big day and Elisabeth Hasselbeck's big mouth  
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to put those plans on hold when the transportation company he worked for laid him off three months ago. Even before that, he says it would have been a challenge to afford the tuition at one of CUNY's senior colleges, which went up from \$4,000 to \$4,600 last year and will increase again in the fall. Without a job, he simply can't make it work.

"It makes me sad that I cannot continue my studies right now," Hernandez says. "I have momentum and wanted to keep that momentum. But I'll have to put that on the backburner for the time being, until I'm employed again. It's not affordable for me at this point."

He says the only time in his life he felt he was middle class was when he served in the Army, primarily because he didn't have the overhead expenses that most

New Yorkers have.

It's true: Many middle class professionals here earn higher salaries than in other parts of the country. But as numerous New Yorkers have discovered in the past year or two, the city's staggering cost of living leaves hardly any room for something to go wrong.

For some, that \$120 a year on subway fares will be the difference between paying the bills and coming up short. For others, it will give them the final push out of New York. Indeed, an internal study conducted for the Bloomberg administration in 2006 found that 25% of New Yorkers who left the city did so because of the high cost of living, compared to just 8% of those who fled New York in 1993.

To be sure, the exorbitant cost of living is not the only explanation for the prob-

lems facing New York's middle class. Another key strain is that, even in good times, the city's economy no longer seems to produce enough jobs that pay middle-income wages and offer clear paths to advancement. The result is that large numbers of people in the five boroughs are working but not earning enough to live comfortably, save money or get ahead.

It's understandable and appropriate that Mayor Bloomberg and other local policymakers have put much of their recent focus on the immediate economic crisis. But it's time for the city and state to start addressing the long-term crisis facing New York: the challenge of retaining and attracting ordinary working families.

New York needs to preserve and grow

a strong middle class — not only because that's always been at the core of the city's and country's success. It's also about survival. The city's critical competitive advantage in today's global economy is our people. At this rate, we risk losing the human capital that makes the city's key industries and institutions run.

That higher MTA fare may help the trains run on time. But it could also begin to empty those trains of the working people who've ridden them for years.

*Bowles is director of the Center for an Urban Future, an independent think tank based in Manhattan. He co-authored, along with Joel Kotkin, "Reviving the City of Aspiration," a 2009 report about the challenges facing New York's middle class.*

# SUNDAY OPINION

## Squeezed on all sides

Bus and subway fare hikes are just the latest hit to New York's besieged middle class

**BE OUR GUEST**

BY JONATHAN BOWLES

**N**orman Hernandez doesn't go out as much as he used to. When he's at home, he tries to put on the fan instead of the AC. And even before the MTA announced this week that it would hike subway fares, the 35-year-old Woodside resident had started biking everywhere to help keep expenses down. "Rider fees on bikes don't go up every two years," he says.

No kidding. Countless other New Yorkers have had to cut back their spending to survive the Great Recession. But unlike in some places or during some recessions, things aren't getting any cheaper in New York now.

On the contrary, the city that already had the highest cost of living in America before the downturn is getting even more expensive. Beginning in the fall, New Yorkers will pay \$120 to \$180 more each year for a monthly MetroCard, depending on which MTA proposal ultimately gets approved. Con Edison recently won approval to raise electricity bills by 12% over the next three years. CUNY tuition is going up, water rates have been rising, health care and child care costs are up, and the state will soon resume collecting sales tax on clothing purchases under \$110.

These cost increases may seem like minor inconveniences. But they all add up to a huge headache for cash-strapped

families. They come at a time when record numbers of New Yorkers are out of work and as wages for those who still have jobs have been stagnating.

Plus, these are only a few sources of the economic pressure on working New Yorkers. City residents pay among the highest prices in the nation for electricity. Telephone service, auto insurance, home heating oil, parking and milk are also higher here than virtually anywhere in the continental U.S. The combined state and local tax bill is also tops among major cities.

Though housing prices have leveled off of late, only 20.9% of housing in New York City was affordable to those earning the median income in the first quarter of 2010. No other region in the U.S. had a lower share of affordable homes.

All this particularly stings middle class New Yorkers and those who are aspiring to rise up to the ranks of the middle class, two groups that have fared particularly badly in the downturn. Two groups that, in our stratified city, are close to earning a place on the urban endangered species list.

Before the onset of the recession, New York's middle class already seemed under siege. The city's skyrocketing costs had prompted rising numbers of middle class residents to consider leaving the city for less expensive locales and left far too many New Yorkers stuck among the working poor, unable to achieve the American promise of upward mobility that has long



EPA/JUSTIN LANE

**The city has gotten even less affordable during the recession**

been a hallmark of this city.

"What middle class?" was the quip I heard repeatedly while interviewing New Yorkers for a 2009 report about the challenges facing the middle class. That report concluded that to truly live like a middle-class family in this city, you have to have a six-figure salary. Scary but true.

Not surprisingly, the recession has made things even worse. A disproportionate share of the job losses in the five boroughs since 2008 has been in moderate- and middle-income wage sectors. It's blue-collar workers; it's secretaries; it's security guards. Only health care hasn't taken a huge hit — yet.

This has brought fresh financial insecurity to scores of solidly middle-class families, many of whom bought expensive homes here in recent years based on

the expectation that two members of the household would hold full-time jobs. It's also pushed numerous working poor residents deeper into poverty — or at least sidetracked their dreams of getting ahead.

**J**ust ask Hernandez, who is on the verge of graduating from LaGuardia Community College this summer. In his mid-30s, he went back to get his associate's degree in large part because he sees higher education as a ticket to the middle class.

"Education is the key to many doors," he says. "I know I can very well make more money than I used to with my degree."

That idealism ran smack into brutal reality. Hernandez, who intended to continue his studies at a four-year college, had



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**DAILY NEWS**

Friday, August 27, 2010

## Robotrains proving to have minds of their own

**EXCLUSIVE**

**BY PETE DONOHUE**  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

SOME ROBOTRAINS have been going rogue on the L line, prompting NYC Transit to temporarily suspend the high-tech operation, the Daily News has learned.

In one incident, a train that was stopped at a Brooklyn platform took off on its own — traveling three to five feet before a crew member on board hit the emergency brakes, NYC Transit confirmed yesterday.

With two other similar incidents recently on the Brooklyn-to-Manhattan line, the agency suspended use of the computerized train control system on Aug. 16, NYC Transit said in a statement yesterday.

Train service continued the old-fashioned way — with motormen doing the driving, not computers — until software fixes were finished last weekend, the agency said.

The so-called Robotrains are part of an expensive package of upgrades involving subway signals, switches and onboard computers that only exists on the L line.

But to critics like Kevin Harrington, a vice president of Transport Workers Union Local 100, glitches are warnings that this system is potentially dangerous.

In automatic train operation mode, the Robotrains are controlled by computers telling them when to stop and how fast to travel.

After discharging passengers at a station, a train should remain idling until the motorman, who's monitoring its operations at the cab's computer, authorizes departure with the push of a button.

"Train operators have the authority to take manual control of their train when necessary while still maintaining a safe operation," NYC Transit said in the statement. "It's important to note safety was not an issue, but reliability was."

Some L-line trains have been modified with the software fix but not the entire fleet, the agency said. Those that were fixed have returned to computer control.

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# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

The New York Times SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2010

## Vans on the Run

By Elliott Sclar  
and Robert E. Paaswell

**I**N the face of drastic cuts in the Metropolitan Transit Authority's bus service, the Bloomberg administration recently decided to allow private vans to carry passengers along several routes in Brooklyn and Queens where city buses once ran. One company began service earlier this month, and four more will be operating by October.

The vans, licensed by the Taxi and Limousine Commission, are meant to be a quick way to close the transit authority's \$800 million budget gap. But relying on a private-sector solution to a public-sector shortfall will also incur significant social costs and possibly doom Mr. Bloomberg's long-term vision for New York's transportation system.

If you've ever spent time in a city in the developing world, chances are you've experienced a transit system that, because of poor public finances, relies on private commuter services. Thanks to low barriers to market entry — often anyone with a working van or bus can pick up passengers — the streets are clogged with a motley assortment of vans and buses, few of them in optimal working condition. The results are, not surprisingly, higher levels of pollution and more accidents and traffic fatalities than in cities with strictly public services.

Mr. Bloomberg and the Taxi and Limousine Commission have offered assurances that better regulations will keep the city from becoming an American Calcutta or Rio de Janeiro. But that's an easy promise to make, and probably an empty one: New York's experiences with crane and building-code regulations demonstrates that enforcement usually costs more than policymakers are willing to spend, especially in lean fiscal times.

Indeed, even though the van compa-

nies are already operating on the former bus routes, the Taxi and Limousine Commission has not added enough personnel to cover its new regulatory responsibilities. (It's worth asking why, if such funds were available, the city shouldn't reinstate some of the bus routes instead).

Moreover, history shows that when it comes to poorly regulated private-service providers, informal cartels often step in to provide their own "regulation" — a problem that the city's original taxi regulations, adopted in the 1930s, were created to prevent. Such cartels, whether organized by the owners themselves or by enterprising local gangs, can easily turn to bribery and even physical violence to keep competition out.

And once in place, informal services like commuter vans, controlled by powerful operators, can become difficult to dislodge, thanks to the political influence they wield. Consider the situation in Johannesburg: the city was able to open its new bus system only after the government agreed to pay \$7,000 for each private minibus it displaced.

Private transit service will also incur social costs. For starters, because the new vans don't accept MetroCards, pas-

seven days a week, for about \$200 in daily pay — before maintenance expenses. These drivers have no health insurance, retirement or disability benefits. Adding more informal workers to the New York work force, even as City Hall cuts the number of city employees, is no way to build a robust local economy.

Finally, increased dependence on fragmented transit service could be an obstacle to Mayor Bloomberg's environmental agenda, PlaNYC 2030, a vision for the next 20 years that relies heavily on an expanded and well-integrated public transit system to all parts of the city. Lobbying by entrenched private operators would likely pressure the city to retain inefficient parts of the status quo — to their benefit and at the public's expense.

True, the Bloomberg administration considers private transit services a temporary solution, to end as soon as it finds the money to restart the affected routes. But City Hall needs to adopt a clear end date and make a meaningful investment in public regulation, including oversight and inspection, including regulations to ensure high-quality labor and vehicle standards.

On the other hand, if the operations are to continue indefinitely, then they need to be quickly integrated into the Metropolitan Transit Authority system, with MetroCard connectivity.

Above all, City Hall needs to recognize that when it comes to public programs, seemingly convenient stopgap measures can easily take on a pernicious life of their own. If it doesn't, one of the nation's most forward-thinking mayors will be responsible for taking his city's transit system back into the past. □

### It's a bad idea to privatize New York City bus lines.

sengers who want to transfer from them to a public bus or train have to pay twice — a significant burden for residents with modest incomes who live along the affected routes.

Second, relying on private service means replacing well-paying transit employees with a lower-paid and typically untaxed labor force. Private van operators have reported working 14-hour days,

*Elliott Sclar is a professor of urban planning and the director of the Center for Sustainable Urban Development at Columbia. Robert E. Paaswell is a professor of civil engineering at the City College of New York.*







# Motorman acts fast and saves woman on the tracks

By PATRICE O'SHAUGHNESSY Daily News Staff Writer

Subway motorman Francis Lusk does the everyday, unsung work of driving a train across the city, getting people where they have to go, never expecting to be called a hero.

But one recent Saturday morning, as he drove an N train into the Fifth Ave.-59th St. station, he came upon the extraordinary sight of a woman walking straight off the platform.

Such a thing might startle one into jamming on the brakes in a panic. Instead, Lusk brought the train to a controlled stop in the nick of time. He called for help, then got on the tracks to help the woman, who lay perilously close to both electrified third rails.

"I didn't think it was a big deal," the soft-spoken Lusk said, his face reddening. All he wanted to do was finish his shift as soon as the woman was safely removed.

Most everyone else thought he was a hero, including his bosses at NYC Transit, passengers — and the Mets, who honored him at Citi Field. Now, for his quick action, calmness under pressure and going above and beyond his duty, he is the Daily News Hero of the Month.

Lusk, 36, who grew up in Elmhurst, Queens, is a relatively new subway train operator, so he works all different lines, all different shifts.

He started work at 5:15 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, took a train out of the Stillwell Ave. yards in Coney Island and got to Manhattan about 7:15 a.m.

"I was two cars into the station and I saw the lady walk fast toward the edge; she came from between

pillars," he said. "I was in total shock. I knew I had to stop the train. And after I did I couldn't believe what happened."

She fell onto the northbound tracks about 300 feet away from his train. Customers on the platform were waving at him, and he stopped the 400-ton train about 70 feet from her.

"If I stopped fast, I'd have injured customers on the train and made a bad situation worse," he recalled. "I told control someone walked off the platform, send assistance and cut the power. I thought I was calm, but I'm kind of afraid to hear what the radio call sounds like."

Conductor Todd Amundsen escorted everyone off the train. "He had the heavy lift," Lusk said. "No one wants to get pulled off a train early in the morning."

Lusk was wearing his orange reflective vest and grabbed his safety glasses before walking down the tracks; the control room had shut off the 625 volts of power on the third rail.

The woman lay twisted in the roadbed but she was conscious. "I asked her if she was okay," Lusk said. "She made slight movements. The only thing she said was she was bleeding. She had a gash on her face. I had tissues in my back pocket and gave them to her."

Lusk asked her some questions to determine if she was lucid, and she knew where she was and what day it was. She was later identified as Nina Webster, 30, of Manhattan. Paramedics took her to New York-Presbyterian Hospital Weill Cornell.

Power was restored, and Lusk pulled into the station, picked up



"I was in total shock," admits Francis Lusk, 36, who saw woman fall onto tracks at Fifth Ave.-59th St. station while he was driving N train. Daily News Hero of month stopped train in nick of time. Photo by Mariela Lombard

passengers and continued his run to Astoria, Queens.

"I was relaxed by the time I got back to work," he said. "The conductor and I hadn't exchanged names at the beginning of the shift, so he said at least we could introduce ourselves now."

Lusk made the front page of The News as well as TV news shows, and the huge Mets fan was feted at a game and got David Wright's autograph. "I was just ecstatic to be on the field," he said.

Passengers recognized him in the days after and called him a hero.

His father says Lusk has been his hero for years. "I was diagnosed with cancer 10 years ago, and he has been taking care of me," Frank Lusk said. "He will never tell you about that."

Lusk, one of five children, worked as a doorman for 11 years in a Park Ave. building before joining the Metropolitan Transportation Authority two years ago.

"My parents always instilled in

us that Civil Service was a good career choice. My grandfather was a subway conductor, and my brother is an NYPD detective," he said.

Webster could not be reached for comment.

"I'd like to see if she was all right... I'd like to know exactly what happened," Lusk said. "I hope it wasn't a matter that she was trying to kill herself. I never experienced anything like that, and I hope I never do again."

poshaughnessy@nydailynews.com





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# CASH FOR VANS

## City's ride plan in jeopardy

BY GARY BUISSO

A private van operator is "bleeding money" trying to provide transit service in Brownstone Brooklyn — part of the city's controversial program to provide "dollar van" service along routes slashed by the MTA.

It's been only two weeks since the Taxi and Limousine Commission launched its pilot program along the now-extinct B71 route, but operator Sulaiman Haqq said he is quickly discovering what the Metropolitan Transportation Service claimed when it closed the

bus route: There aren't enough paying customers.

"We are bleeding money," said Haqq, whose Brooklyn Van Lines won the right to operate on the Carroll Gardens to Crown Heights route.

Haqq said he is averaging between one and four passengers during his 6 am to 10 pm shift. At \$2 a fare, he doesn't even earn enough for lunch, let alone enough to make a profit.

Haqq has implored the city to subsidize the program, but the agency will not.

"This is the reason why public transportation is subsidized," Haqq said. "It is not profitable."

TLC spokesman Allan

Fromberg said it was "premature" to issue a death knell for the program in Brownstone Brooklyn or along the former Williamsburg-to-Manhattan B39 line or the B23, which once connected Kensington to Borough Park.

Critics complain that Haqq's two vans are unreliable because there's no set time schedule.

"This is what happens when you privatize public goods," said Brad Kerr of the Columbia Waterfront Neighborhood Association. "You get vans that elderly folks, disabled folks, school kids and MetroCard users can't rely on."



No wonder "dollar van" driver Devon Gordon is so sad. He and partner Sulaiman Haqq aren't making any money operating along the former B71 bus route.

Photo by Stefano Giovannini





# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

## Murder Verdict In Bus Slaying Drives Home Job's Peril

By ARI PAUL

Justice Gustin Reichbach's decision Oct. 7 to convict Horace Moore, who fatally stabbed Brooklyn Bus Operator Edwin Thomas during a fare dispute in December 2008, of the top charge of second-degree murder drew a sigh of relief from the dozens of fellow transit workers packed inside the courtroom.

It wasn't so much that the verdict meant the likelihood of a life sentence increased as that it underscored how dangerous the job actually is, after Metropolitan Transportation Authority CEO and Chairman Jay Walder has accused drivers of lollygagging in bus depots, playing pool on company time, and being protected by dubious contract rules.

### 'Makes Them Revisit Safety'

"It's going to force everyone to revisit Bus Operator safety," said Transport Workers Union Local 100 President John Samuelsen outside the courtroom. "It's a gross insult to transit workers when Jay Walder downplays what they do. The operators are in a far more dangerous position than they were before the service cuts."

At the time, the death of Mr.

Thomas, 46, sent shockwaves through the union, as it was the first murder of a driver since 1981. He had followed protocol by letting Mr. Moore, a multiple offender with a past conviction for attempted murder, on the bus even though he did not pay, but then denied him a transfer, triggering a confrontation in which Mr. Moore punched him and then, following further argument, repeatedly stabbed him.

Bus Operators are the most assaulted members of the transit force, as they have the most exposure to riders, and most are not insulated by barriers like Train Operators, Conductors or Station Agents. And with service cuts, fare hikes, and talk of more austerity at the MTA, crowded buses and deteriorating conditions could cause another Horace Moore to edge toward the brink, endangering workers.

"There was an uptick," Mr. Samuel-

sen said of assaults on drivers, "that coincided with the service cuts."

### Problems With Precautions

After the murder, Local 100 began working with New York City Transit on installing partitions, and a pilot program on some buses has been underway, although Local 100 Safety Director Earl Phillips said that some drivers have complained that they swing open when the buses make a sharp turn. The union has also studied retractable partitions on public buses in cities such as Lisbon, Portugal, where they completely separate the driver from the passengers when closed.

Mr. Phillips said that talks between the union and NYC Transit on other types of partitions have stalled, and although he believed Mr. Walder was concerned with Bus Operator safety,

the fighting between the union and the MTA concerning how the agency is going to close its sizable budget gap has taken center stage.

"It's all about politics with him," he said.

Moses Del Rio, a Bus Operator based at Fresh Pond Depot with three years on the job, said "it was a very good day for us" after hearing the verdict, recalling how he was shaken up when he first learned about Mr. Thomas's murder.

"I had just started," he said. "I thought, 'Did I make the right career move?'"

### 'Need Patience With Riders'

Mr. Del Rio noted that since then he and other drivers have been on guard not to anger passengers, saying "you

(Continued on reverse)

## The Chief

Civil Service LEADER

THE CIVIL EMPLOYEES' WEEKLY

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The Chief-Leader/Andrew Hinderaker  
**JUSTICE, BUT LITTLE COMFORT:** Edley (left) and Jeffery Thomas, the daughter and son of Edwin Thomas, the Bus Operator who was fatally stabbed in December 2008, speak to reporters after a Brooklyn judge found Horace Moore guilty of murder in the second degree.



gotta have patience.”

He criticized the judge's decision to bar the media from taking photos or video footage of Mr. Moore, a relatively small man, believing it was important that Bus Operators know that even people on the bus who don't appear to be a physical threat could cause real danger. When the judge made his final ruling on photography before announcing the verdict, a transit worker muttered, "Clown's got too many rights." Another said to her co-worker, "He murdered one of us."

The defense's case, aimed at downgrading the verdict to manslaughter, rested on the notion that Mr. Thomas had provoked Mr. Moore into coming back onto the bus, but surveillance video of the incident didn't persuade the judge.

Sentencing will take place Oct. 19. Mr. Thomas is survived by a son and daughter.

"I think that the summation that was done by the [Assistant District Attorney] was phenomenal," Mr. Samuelsen said.



The Chief-Leader/Andrew Hinderaker

**WILL HE GET LIFE?:** Transit workers said last week they want Horace Moore, being led out of the courtroom after his conviction, to receive life in prison for fatally stabbing Bus Operator Edwin Thomas over a transfer. The surveillance video of the event was damning, they said; Mr. Moore already had prior assault and weapon convictions.



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## The Chief

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### *Letters to the Editor*

## MTA Missing in Court

*To the Editor:*

Horace Moore, the killer of MTA Bus Operator Edwin Thomas, was sentenced to 20 years to life Oct. 19 in Brooklyn Supreme Court. Present in the courtroom were dozens of fellow MTA workers, including myself, who were moved to tears by the heartfelt impact statement read by his incredibly brave 18-year-old daughter Edley. At that age, I don't believe I could have mustered enough strength to be as poised and eloquent as she was. Her entire family should be proud of the job they are doing raising this young lady in the face of such a horrific ordeal.

That being said, the point of my letter is to question why there was no

one present in the courtroom on behalf of MTA management. I know Bus Operators, Train Operators, Conductors, Station Agents, Cleaners, Traffic Checkers and other "highly visible to the public" titles are on the low end of the organizational structure of the MTA, but are we so dispensable that we don't merit the decency and respect of those who run this agency?

The workers in these titles and many others already know the answer to that question. Perhaps now the public will understand that the MTA treats its employees in the same manner it treats the public: we aren't people, we are resources and a means to generate and collect revenue. Nothing more.

**SCOTT K. HARRIS**

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## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

# DAILY NEWS

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

# How Cuomo can get on track

■ Incoming Gov. Andrew Cuomo will have a great deal of power to improve subway, bus and commuter service, as well as to hold the line on fares. Riders really need his leadership after three years of fare hikes and the worst service cuts in memory.

■ Decent transit service is key to the quality of life for literally millions downstate, as well as critical to the region's economic recovery. New York's unimaginable without transit to move huge numbers of workers, customers, tourists, students and others.

■ Cuomo will need to turn around transit's current grim outlook. He will need to make some key changes, such as ensuring improved oversight. And he will need to continue what's working.

### Make Needed Changes

■ Our new governor should:

■ Pledge that state officials will not raid taxes that the public was told would be dedicated to transit. In the last year, \$160 million in promised funds were taken from the MTA.

■ Beef up two key Metropolitan Transportation Authority watchdogs. First, increase the management expertise and focus of the independent MTA Office of the Inspector General, which was created to improve the MTA's efficiency. Second, fund the new Independent Authorities Budget Office so it can investigate public complaints against

### BE OUR GUEST

#### BY GENE RUSSIANOFF

■ authorities. Also, strongly enforce the recent mandate that authorities document their contacts with lobbyists.

■ Require MTA agencies to catalogue all of their available data and post as much of it as possible on the Internet, from profiles of city buses to details of contracts exceeding \$500,000. Right now, gathering this information requires time and much sleuthing.

■ Use the bully pulpit to encourage employers throughout New York State to offer their workers tax-free transit benefits.

■ Federal law exempts wages used to pay for transit from most taxes. This program substantially lowers fares and business costs. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are in the program, but millions more could be benefiting if there were greater awareness of the program, which requires employers to join up.

### Keep What's Working

■ At the same time, Cuomo needs the wisdom to continue sensible initiatives already underway. For example, he should:

■ Come up with a plan to fund the last three years of the MTA's vital 2010-14 capital program, which is about \$10 billion short. The program — which started in 1982 — pays for new subway cars, buses

and commuter rail trains, rehabilitated stations, and rebuilt infrastructure, such as track and signals. It is essential to getting decent service. Possibilities — all politically challenging — range from winning new federal funds to East River bridge tolls to congestion pricing to savings in building big expansion projects like East Side Access, which will connect the Long Island Rail Road to Grand Central Terminal.

■ Keep pressing the MTA to make additional management efficiencies that do not result in service cuts. Currently, about \$100 million of the MTA's planned \$500 million in annual savings are

service cuts. From killing 36 bus routes to reductions in car cleaners and station announcers. Real management improvements are critical to rebuilding public confidence in transit.

■ Keep MTA Chairman Jay Walder and New York City Transit President Tom Prendergast. Both men are transit professionals serious about running the agency more efficiently — and the system now needs continuity of leadership, not more upheaval.

■ Reappoint several MTA board members

who are now holdovers and have been doing good work for the public. These include the highly knowledgeable member who oversees the board's subway subcommittee — Doreen Frasca — and Norman Brown, an open-minded and smart representative of labor.

■ Give solid support to MTA service-related initiatives, such as station countdown clocks that give riders real-time information on train and bus arrivals; smart cards that simplify fare collection, and Select Bus Service, a new program to speed notorious

ly slow buses that the MTA runs jointly with the city Department of Transportation. Select Bus Service in particular holds great promise for bringing faster service to many parts of the city.

■ One last item may sound symbolic, but it's key. Our new governor should use subways, buses and commuter rail when he can. There's nothing like firsthand experience. Perhaps Cuomo should start off his term by riding the M15 Select Bus down Second Ave. to his new office on Third Ave.

■ Russianoff is senior attorney at the Straphangers Campaign.

## Right out of the gate,

### subway and bus

### riders need strong

### leadership from

### the new governor



# TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

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## The Chief

Civil Service **LEADER**

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## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF GREATER NEW YORK • AFL-CIO • LOCAL 100

Department of Communications

Wednesday, December 15, 2010

# DAILY NEWS

## A big win for MTA workers

THE MTA MUST give bus and subway workers a 3% raise next year and lower their health care contributions, a panel of judges ruled.

The Appellate Division decision could finally put an end to a bitter legal battle between the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Transport Workers Union Local 100 over the terms of a contract fashioned by an arbitrator last year.

Both sides agreed to arbitration after failing to directly negotiate a deal.

But once the decision was issued, the MTA filed a series of unsuccessful legal challenges, based partly on claims it couldn't afford the package.

"This is a huge victory," Local 100 President John Samuelson said.

The salary bump for some 35,000 workers will cost about \$77 million next year, the MTA said. The ruling also retroactively lowers workers' health care contributions.

**Pete Donohue**





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## The Chief

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December 24, 2010

### Appeals Court Upholds 3% Hike, Rest of TWU '09 Arbitration Award

By FLORA FAIR

An appellate court Dec. 14 upheld a lower-court ruling that members of Transport Workers Union Local 100 are entitled to a 3-percent raise and a reduction in health-care premiums that were part of a 2009 arbitration award of the union's contract with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Besides the raise for 35,000 employees of New York City Transit and the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority, the MTA must reimburse workers for health-care contributions going back about 18 months. The arbitration award capped employee contributions at 1.5 percent of pay for 40 hours per week, but the MTA was taking out 1.53 percent of all hours worked, as it was permitted to under a prior contract. These reimbursements are also expected in January, according to union officials.

Local 100 General Counsel Larry Cary said that the MTA could appeal to the state Court of Appeals, but that process would be more difficult.

#### MTA Undecided on Appeal

MTA spokesman Jeremy Soffin said, "We're disappointed that in a year when we've had to lay off thousands of employees and cut service, this ruling and the arbitration award fail to consider the MTA's ability to pay these raises. No decision has been made on [whether to appeal]."

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen said he was "very pleased" with the decision. "The 3-percent raise in 2011 is welcome," he said "It's difficult enough for a family to stay afloat here now, so a 3-percent raise in this economy will have a positive impact on our members." The MTA had not appealed two earlier 4-percent increases under the award, which

matched what the Bloomberg administration gave many of its employees.

The disputed contract was agreed to following arbitration. But once the decision was issued, the MTA began contesting it, saying it couldn't afford the estimated \$77-million price tag and that the terms went beyond the arbitrator's scope.

"They don't want the union to strike, but then when the union does what the MTA wants it to do they don't want to grant the award," Mr. Samuelsen said, referring to TWU's choice to go to binding arbitration, rather than strike as it did in 2005—in violation of Taylor Law. "The MTA constantly wants its cake and to eat it too."

#### Costly In-House Mistakes

The contract process was called into question in a September 2010 report from MTA Inspector General Barry Kluger, which blamed the previous MTA administration for negligence in labor relations. Mr. Kluger said the 2008 decision not to increase health-care contributions when the agency could have was made by then-NYCT President Howard Roberts without consultation of MTA executives, and cost the agency \$3 million. The report also stated that John Zuccotti, who served as the neutral panelist in the 2009 arbitration, billed more than \$116,000 for his services and asked that it be donated to Local 100's Widows and Orphans Fund. This, Mr. Kluger asserted, not only called his impartiality into question, but also the cost of his services, which the Inspector General said should have been determined before he was retained. The arbitration also cost MTA and TWU an additional \$288,000, billed by the law firm where Mr. Zuccotti worked. Following public criticism, Mr. Zuccotti waived his fee.

Mr. Samuelsen said this decision could set the tone for other unions facing stalled negotiations with the MTA. "With the court victory, the bargaining position of every other MTA union... is increased substantially."

The current contract with transit workers expires in January 2012.