

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 21, 2020

Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
Office of the Speaker  
U.S. Capitol H-232  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Leader Kevin McCarthy  
Office of the Minority Leader  
U.S. Capitol H-204  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

As negotiations continue on a recovery package for those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, we ask that you include in the federal stimulus package emergency federal aid for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) of at least \$4 billion. This financial support will enable the MTA to continue emergency operations despite massive losses in revenue from decreased ridership during this unprecedented time.

As you know, New York State is experiencing the largest coronavirus outbreak of any state in the country, with over 7,000 cases statewide as of March 20. More than 3,000 of those cases are in New York City alone. In the face of this challenging crisis, MTA has stepped up its sanitation protocols and continues to operate in order to ensure that essential staff – including medical professionals, first responders, essential government employees, and childcare workers – can get to where they need to be. Without the courageous service of MTA’s 75,000 employees and the continued operation of New York’s subways, buses, and railroads, the region’s ability to fight this pandemic would be totally paralyzed. Simply put, public transit is indispensable in combatting this pandemic.

However, MTA is experiencing a shocking loss of revenue; the agency reports that its ridership has fallen approximately 60 percent on the subways, 49 percent on buses, 90 percent on Metro-North, and 67 percent on Long Island Rail Road. MTA anticipates its full loss to be over \$4 billion by the end of 2020. These numbers are staggering. It is impossible for MTA to account for this loss by itself, and the state of New York, which has been equally hard hit by this pandemic, cannot shoulder these costs on its own. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo recently stated that “this [New York State] government cannot meet this crisis without the resources and capacity of the federal government.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, we are writing because it is Congress’s duty to step in and guarantee the MTA can continue its essential services.

Ensuring that MTA remains fully functioning is not just a priority for the greater New York region, but also for the nation. The MTA is the largest public transit system in the United States and represents 38% of total passenger trips among all U.S. public transit agencies.<sup>2</sup>[\[2\]](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Bowden, John. “Cuomo: Coronavirus peak in NY could be in 45 days.” The Hill. March 17, 2020. <https://thehill.com/policy/healthcare/487992-cuomo-coronavirus-peak-could-be-in-45-days>

<sup>2</sup> Dickens, Matthew, and MacPherson Hughes-Cromwick. “2020 Public Transportation Fact Book Appendix B: Operating Statistics & Rankings.” *American Public Transportation Association*, Mar. 2020, [www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-2020-Fact-Book.pdf](http://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-2020-Fact-Book.pdf).

Furthermore, New York and Connecticut produce more than nine percent of the national GDP.<sup>3</sup> A strong MTA is essential to a strong New York and the region, and our regional strength is essential to our national strength.

Reliable mass transit is vital to the New York region's efforts to combat this pandemic; without a fully functioning MTA, our national response to this pandemic will be incapacitated, and recovery will be impossible. Yet MTA cannot continue without federal assistance. That is why we are requesting that you provide at least \$4 billion in federal financial aid to MTA. We also support assistance for public transit systems nationwide.

We thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your work on behalf of the nation during this crisis.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

Jim Himes  
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

Peter T. King  
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

Hakeem S. Jeffries  
Member of Congress

Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress

Max Rose  
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman of the House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee

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<sup>3</sup> "Gross Domestic Product by State, Third Quarter 2019." BEA. United States Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis, January 10, 2020. [https://www.bea.gov/system/files/2020-01/qgdystate0120\\_2.pdf](https://www.bea.gov/system/files/2020-01/qgdystate0120_2.pdf).