



## Memorandum re: Questions for Thomas Prendergast

To: Members of the Senate Transportation and Finance Committees  
Re: Questions for Thomas Prendergast, nominee for MTA Chairman and CEO  
Date: June 15, 2013  
From: Gene Russianoff, Staff Attorney, NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign and  
John Raskin, Executive Director, Riders Alliance

As you know, Governor Cuomo has nominated Thomas Prendergast as Chairman and CEO of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. The nomination currently awaits confirmation by the State Senate.

We urge members of the Senate to support Mr. Prendergast's nomination. Tom Prendergast is an experienced public transportation professional who has successfully led the Long Island Rail Road and New York City Transit, and we look forward to working with him in his new capacity as Chairman and CEO of the MTA.

Additionally, we urge the Senate to consider and approve Mr. Prendergast's nomination expeditiously. A well-functioning MTA is vital to the region's economy, to the City and State of New York, and to more than eight million people who use the MTA's buses, subways, commuter rails, bridges and tunnels every day. The agency is in dire need of stable, long-term leadership, and approving Mr. Prendergast's nomination is an important step toward achieving that goal.

As you consider Mr. Prendergast's nomination, we ask that you explore these questions with him that will be awaiting the next MTA Chair:

1) **\$40 Million:** Two MTA Board members have proposed creating a \$40 million fund to restore and enhance transit service. Last year, the MTA found nearly \$30 million for improved service. What is the prospect of \$40 million in service restorations and increases being included in the MTA's 2014 budget?

2) **R and G Tunnel Closures:** The MTA recently announced Superstorm Sandy repair plans that will include closing the R train tunnel between Brooklyn and Manhattan for 14 months and the G train tunnel between Brooklyn and Queens for 12 weekends this year and 5 weeks next year. What is the MTA's plan to alleviate the burden on transit riders during this time, not just for R and G train riders but also for riders on the many other train lines that will experience additional crowding during this extended construction period?

3) **Select Bus Service:** SBS has been a success for the MTA and its riders, winning more customers with faster and reliable service. By the end of the year, there will be seven SBS routes in four boroughs. How many new SBS routes do you think can and should be built in the city over the next ten years and at what cost?

4) **Public Forums:** Last year, the MTA Board reduced the number of yearly Board meetings from 11 to 8. At the same time, the MTA promised to hold two forums a year where members of the public could ask questions of the MTA leadership. If confirmed, are you committed to starting those forums this fall?

5) **Green Fee:** Starting in March, the MTA began to charge a \$1 "green fee" for buying a new MetroCard instead of refilling it. What has been the MTA's experience with the policy to date? What is the rate of re-use? Is the MTA gaining net revenue from the fee? If so, are those funds being set aside for cleaning stations?

6) **Capital Plan:** In 2014, the current MTA five-year capital plan will expire. What are the capital needs and priorities of the MTA in the next five years, and what will the MTA need from the state in order to fulfill them?

Thank you for your attention to this nomination and for your work to bring stable, long-term leadership to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

cc: Karen Rae