



Testimony of Assistant Commissioner Samara Karasyk  
New York City Council Hearing on Introduction Number 295  
June 30, 2014

Good morning Chairman Rodriguez and members of the Committee on Transportation. I am Samara Karasyk, the Assistant Commissioner of External Affairs at the New York City Department of Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on Introduction Number 295 regarding pre-tax transit benefits for New Yorkers.

We share the Council's goal of increasing access to mass transit for workers in New York City and look forward to discussing how to best to provide such access. However, we have concerns about the implementation of the bill based on the scope of what we do at the Department of Finance, and do not believe this program should fall under our jurisdiction.

As it stands, Introduction Number 295 requires employers with at least twenty employees to offer pre-tax transit benefits, which give employees the option to use part of their pre-tax earnings to purchase transportation (such as a mass transit card). Employers that do not comply would be subject to penalties of fifty dollars per day per employee. This bill requires the Department of Finance to issue warnings and notices to violators and assess and collect civil penalties.

The scope of the tasks set out in this legislation is outside of the functions of the Department of Finance as stated in the New York City Charter. Those functions are assessing

real property, collecting taxes, managing the City's Treasury, and operating the Parking Violations Bureau, as well as the City Register and the Sheriff's Office. We do not issue this type of notice of violation. Our in-house adjudication forum hears only parking violations, which are mostly issued by the New York City Police Department. We do not manage New York City employee benefits on any level outside of our own agency and do not have general data on how New York businesses are staffed or the types of benefits offered to their employees.

Although the Department of Finance is not the appropriate agency to enforce a transit benefit program for New York employees, we look forward to having further discussions with the Council regarding this important issue.

At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

# Center *for an* Urban Future

A project of City Futures, Inc.

---

120 Wall Street, 20<sup>th</sup> floor · New York, NY 10005 · P: 212-479-3344 · F: 212-479-3338 · [www.nycfuture.org](http://www.nycfuture.org)

**Testimony of Adam Forman  
Research and Communications Associate, Center for an Urban Future**

**Before New York City Council Committee on Transportation**

**“Pre-Tax Transit Benefits”**

**June 30, 2014**

Chairman Rodriguez, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify.

My name is Adam Forman. I am the Research and Communications Associate at the Center for an Urban Future. The Center is a research institute devoted to growing and diversifying the New York City economy, expanding economic opportunity and alleviating obstacles facing low-income and working-class neighborhoods.

Prior to the recent Mayoral election, the Center, in partnership with NYU Wagner Innovation Labs, undertook an ambitious and far-reaching project. Over a six month period, three researchers scoured the globe for the most innovative and replicable urban policies from the last decade. We interviewed nearly 200 policy experts, including current and former mayors, chiefs of staff, and agency commissioners, as well as leading thinkers from philanthropic foundations, policy institutes, corporations, labor unions and advocacy groups. This effort—which we dubbed “Innovation and the City”—invigorated the election cycle debate, offering the New York City mayoral candidates a menu of innovative ideas drawn from the most inspired policies in the most vibrant cities around the country and the world.

Among the fifteen policies we selected for our final report was a practical and inspired reform from San Francisco: Pre-Tax Transit Benefits. This policy – which requires businesses in San Francisco with 20 or more employees to provide tax-free commuter benefits – promises to decrease payroll taxes for employers, save money for commuters and ensure that a greater share of the income earned in New York stays in the local economy rather than being sent to Washington—a noteworthy benefit for a city that routinely sends more tax dollars to the federal government than it gets back in return. Clearly, this policy is a no-brainer.

In fact, we at the Center find pre-tax transit benefits to be so beneficial, that we offer them in our six person office. We hope that all New York City employers, whether large or small, will implement this policy. The passage of this legislation is an important step forward toward that goal.

Thank you for considering my testimony. I look forward to your questions.



**Statement of Anthony Torres  
NYC Sustainability Program  
New York League of Conservation Voters**

City Council Committee on Transportation  
June 30, 2014

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Chair**

Kevin S. Corbett

**Vice-Chairs**

Henry T. Berger  
Henry B. Gutman  
Lisa Linden

**Secretary**

Gail S. Port

**Treasurer**

Rosalind Edelman

**Members**

Susan Babcock  
Cynthia E. Bing  
Nanette Bourne  
Jon R. Del Giorno  
Claire L. Dorfman  
Jonathan S. Drescher  
Richard L. Farren  
Barbara J. Fife  
Kenneth K. Fisher  
John L. Greenthal  
Marjorie L. Hart  
Robin Hubbard  
Rhea Jezer, Ph.D.  
Suri Kasirer  
Granville Martin  
Evan Mason, MA  
James Mellus, M.D.  
Glenn J. Pacchiana  
Michael J. Posillico  
Denise M. Richardson  
Larry Rockefeller  
Theodore Roosevelt V  
Peter M. Schulte  
Peggy Shepard  
James Tripp  
Edward C. Wallace  
Charles Warren

**Honorary Board**

John H. Adams  
Frances Beinecke  
Christopher Elliman  
Paul J. Elston  
Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

**President**

Marcia H. Bystryn

Good morning. My name is Anthony Torres and I am representing the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 25,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient.

NYLCV would like to thank Chair Rodriguez and members of the transportation committee for holding this hearing on Intro. 0295 that would require employers of 20 or more employees to offer federal commuter tax benefits for transit riders. A transit friendly city is a more sustainable one. Encouraging more New Yorkers to use mass transit will help combat air pollution and help the city meet its emissions goals.

First, promoting mass transit use can help alleviate pollution from motor vehicles which aggravates asthma and other cardiorespiratory conditions. According to a recent study by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in 2013 eight times as many New Yorkers died from air pollution-related health issues than from murder. In New York City, mass transit is responsible for 400 million fewer pounds of soot, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, and other toxic substances released each year into the City's air. While we applaud the City's continued progress in the fight toward improving air quality, studies show that that air pollution is still a significant contributor to premature deaths.

Second, supporting a transit-friendly city also makes it a more equitable and affordable one. Intro. 0295 will make public transit more affordable to the 605,000 more New Yorkers that will be eligible for this tax break. When transit riders purchase their monthly MetroCard with pre-tax dollars, the average New Yorker earning the median wage can expect to save almost \$450 a year with pre-tax transit benefits. But they can only take advantage of this benefit if their employers offer it.

Moving forward, NYLCV is committed to working with Chair Rodriguez and members of the Transportation Committee to create a more sustainable and equitable city for all New Yorkers.

Testimony by Nancy Ploeger, President, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce

Good morning. My name is Nancy Ploeger, President of the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce. MCC is a vibrant business membership organization comprised of a cross section of 10,000 business members and subscribers throughout the borough.

Although the qualified transportation benefits is a worthwhile program, MCC opposes mandating this federal voluntary program in NYC.

While the city council and the administration is working with us on regulatory reforms and reduction in fines on non-safety and direct health related regulations, looking to create yet another mandate with heavy punitive fines is working against those very efforts.

If the intention of the proposal is to increase the enrollment of both employers and employees, may we suggest instead that there be a concerted city-wide effort to educate employers of all size businesses about the benefits to both their companies and their employees *before* taking a drastic step of mandating this program? I know MCC would be willing to work with the council on outreach and I am sure several other business organizations would be willing to do as well.

We have discussed this with many of our members; small businesses with less than 10 employees and also with a business with 70 and one with 200 employees. For the smaller employers, the costs to administer the program -both actual hard costs plus additional record keeping and tracking of the program- are challenging. And some of the outside payroll management companies (ke Paychex, one of the largest) used by small companies do not offer it so they would also have to go to a third party administrator. We heard from the business owner with 70 employees, who does not have a separate human resources director, the burden to administer the program is costly and time consuming on top of what their office manager already has to handle.

The company with 200 employees who we spoke with does already offer the program. Only 45 employees take advantage of it and they are the higher wage earners in the company who can afford to have the \$112 monthly metrocard taken out of their paychecks. When I asked the HR Director why he thought the other employees did not take advantage of it, he stated that they were the lower wage earners who rely on every dollar in their paychecks and they did not want any money taken out of their paychecks period, even if at the end of the year, they save \$200-\$300. It is a matter of cash flow for those employees. He also stated that it is a very time consuming program to oversee and is especially draining during the initial set up and enrollment.

We also oppose the mandate because of the burdens on small businesses who do not have human resource departments to handle the administration. MCC did a snap poll last week of 50 businesses of varying sizes to find the average size of a business where a human resource director is normally put in place. The results show that most businesses do not have directors until they hit the 100+ employee mark.

MCC respectfully requests that there be consideration given to finding other ways to educate employers and employees about the benefits of the program before creating a mandate. We are happy to work with the council on coming up with ways to increase outreach and enrollment.

Nancy Ploeger, MCC, 1375 Broadway, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, NY, NY 10018 [np@manhattancc.org](mailto:np@manhattancc.org) 212-473-7875



**NYPIRG**

# **Straphangers Campaign**

A project of the New York Public Interest Research Group

9 Murray Street, 3rd floor, New York, NY 10007-2272 • 212-349-6460 • fax 212-349-1366 • [www.straphangers.org](http://www.straphangers.org)

Testimony  
of  
Cate Contino  
Straphangers Campaign Coordinator  
New York Public Interest Research Group  
New York City Council  
Transportation Committee  
Hearing on  
Intro 295-2014 (Tax-free Transit Benefits)  
City Hall

June 30, 2014

Today, the Committee on Transportation is holding a hearing on Intro 295-2014. Intro 295 would require employers with 20 or more employees provide their staff the opportunity to use pre-tax dollars to save hundreds on MetroCards and commutation tickets. We strongly support this common sense bill.

Subway and bus fares have gone up four times in the past six years. And the price tag for a 30-day unlimited MetroCard has nearly doubled since they were introduced in 1998 - from \$63 to \$112!

But something can be done to help struggling New Yorkers - The City Council can adopt Intro 295, which would require employers with 20 or more employees provide their staff the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to subsidize transit service.

My company, the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), has been offering this benefit since 1998. While the total workforce of NYPIRG fluctuates throughout any given year, we have roughly 25-30 full-time employees in New York City who elect to have pre-tax earnings withheld for this benefit every year.

According to our service provider, already this year our employees have collectively saved some \$6,000. At the same time, the company has saved over \$1,100. This savings is partially reduced by the administrative cost of offering the benefit.<sup>1</sup>

Since 1998, NYPIRG has saved some \$24,000. Employees of NYPIRG have saved a whopping \$126,000. By claiming the benefit, I personally save about \$400 each year. Money I can then spend in my community, on my family, or simply enjoying New York City.

We urge the City Council to pass Intro 295, allowing some 605,000 New Yorkers the opportunity to claim this benefit.<sup>2</sup> And in the process not only help transit riders, but also assist employers in saving on their payroll tax obligation.

---

<sup>1</sup> NYPIRG offers TransitChek through WageWorks. The WageWorks website allows you to see year-to-date and lifetime savings for your company through their online interface. Savings can be adjusted based on the workforce's assumed tax rate and the company's FICA tax rate. For NYPIRG, we assume an employee tax rate of 40% and a FICA tax rate of 7.65%.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.ridersny.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Riders-Alliance-Report-on-Pre-Tax-Transit-Benefits-4-27-14-FINAL.pdf>.

**New York City Council**  
**Hearing on Int. No. 295-2014**  
**June, 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014 @ 10:00am**

Testimony of Andrew Rigie, Executive Director, NYC Hospitality Alliance

My name is Andrew Rigie and I am the executive director of the New York City Hospitality Alliance, a not-for-profit trade association, representing restaurant and nightlife establishments throughout the five boroughs.

Many of our members would be impacted by Int. No. 295, which mandates that small businesses with twenty or more employees offer them the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to purchase transportation benefits.

While this federal deduction is a great program for many employers and employees, the federal government created it as a voluntary program. And, unfortunately, many of our members are unaware that this program even exists. Therefore we believe that before any new employer mandate is discussed, our government must invest in an employer outreach and an advertising campaign to make them aware of the program.

For some employers this program may work well, but it is not without financial and administrative burdens, especially for employers who do payroll in-house. Some payroll companies do not even administer this benefit. Therefore this would require certain employers to switch their payroll companies or find a third party company and incur additional administration fees, that often include charges on each order of transit cards, and the shipping costs.

There are various ways the benefit is administered, sometimes, employers buy the transit cards up front, and then the employees repay them via their payroll deduction. We've been told that employees may leave the employer mid-month, which means that employers have an additional administrative task of adjusting the deduction in an employee's final paycheck to cover the remaining balance on the card they already received, or the business is forced to absorb that cost. Since employers order these cards in advance, there can be situations where an employee leaves the employer or opts out of the program, leaving the employer with extra cards they've paid for.

We've spoken with human resource managers who have told us about the additional resources they need to administer this benefit, so we are further concerned about how the thousands of restaurants without HR would be manage this mandate. Sure some employers may reduce their payroll taxes burdens when employees utilize this deduction, however the administrative fees and burdens can also exceed those savings.

In addition to the costs and administrative burdens posed by Int. No. 295, we believe that this is yet another example of local businesses having more mandates forced upon them with a threat of expensive fines, even for accidental non-compliance. We also have questions about the authority of city government, again, drifting into the realm of labor law, a power traditionally vested in state and federal government, especially when this mandate does not have a public health or safety justification.

We respectfully urge the supporters of this bill to sit down with The Alliance and the greater business community to discuss a cooperative outreach campaign to educate and encourage employers on how to utilize this voluntary program before rushing to mandate it.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Rigie  
Executive Director  
arigie@theNYCalliance.org

Advocates of the  
Food Industry  
Since 1900



## **FOOD INDUSTRY ALLIANCE OF NEW YORK STATE, INC.**

130 Washington Avenue • Albany, NY 12210 • Tel (518) 434-1900 • Fax (518) 434-9962  
Government Relations (518) 434-8144

### **Comments**

#### **By the Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc. In Opposition To Int. No. 295-2014**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify at today's public hearing. My name is Jay Peltz and I am the General Counsel and Vice President of Government Relations for the Food Industry Alliance of New York State. The Food Industry Alliance is a nonprofit trade association that, among other things, promotes the interests statewide of New York's grocery stores, drug stores and convenience stores. Our members include chain and independent food retailers that account for a significant share of New York City's retail food market and the wholesalers that supply them.

Before addressing the bill text and the economic environment in which this public hearing is being held, I'd like to note our serious concerns regarding the City's legal authority to enact legislation that directly conflicts with federal law. We have articulated these issues to Council staff, including whether a city agency has the legal authority to enforce a city law based on city interpretations of what is required under a federal law. We look forward to continuing that conversation.

Regarding the economic environment, many of our members are small businesses struggling to survive as we muddle through the fifth year of the weakest recovery on record. As a result, weak consumer spending has become the new normal. In turn, unemployment remains stubbornly high in the City, at 7.9% in May 2014 (it was 10.6% in the Bronx), compared to 6.7% in New York State and 6.3% nationally.

On top of that, new laws and regulatory changes, no matter how well intended, have imposed significant costs on businesses as they comply with the Affordable Care Act (and the resulting rise in insurance premiums), the City's expanded paid sick law, a state minimum wage hike (with significant pressure for additional meaningful increases) and state as well as federal tax increases. The cumulative effects of these and other changes will increase further the already high cost of doing business in the City and ultimately reduce business investment and therefore job growth. An unintended consequence is that we wind up hurting the very people we seek to help through policy changes.

One additional note about context: when it comes to supermarkets, New York City is understored. According to the previous Administration, New York City only has approximately 800 full service supermarkets to serve a population of over 8.3 million people, creating food deserts in neighborhoods throughout the City. Excessive regulation will worsen the food desert problem, with its attendant



consequences. When determining whether excessive regulation exists, we should examine not only the proposed law being debated, but the nature and scope of regulations in effect at the time of such debate.

Given this overall context, this measure would, for reasons discussed below, further hurt our members, especially our small business members that are struggling to survive in a very competitive, very low margin business and are always seeking to avoid job cuts and price increases.

The legislation makes what is voluntary under federal law – offering employees the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to purchase qualified transportation benefits - mandatory under local law. This mandate will cover small businesses, since the bill's requirements are triggered when a business employs as few as 20 people. Businesses with 20 people are small in the real world sense: they are generally small in revenues, small in profits and thinly capitalized. They certainly cannot afford to pay a penalty of fifty dollars for each day that a failure to make a compliant offer occurs *for each employee* that fails to receive the opportunity required under federal law.

In addition, employers of 20 workers typically do not have a human resources department. Accordingly, those businesses would be forced to pay an outside consultant to establish and administer a complicated federal program, together with the burden of monitoring the services provided by the consultant. Moreover, to the extent that employee participation is low, payroll tax savings will be low. This creates the possibility that the program will generate net costs for a small employer struggling to survive in a challenging operating environment.

We respectfully request that the Council work with the business community to develop opportunities to increase participation in the federal qualified transportation benefits program outside of the context of a mandate, including enhancing marketing efforts by stakeholders and full reimbursement of employers' administrative costs.

Accordingly, the Food Industry Alliance, on behalf of its members, opposes adoption of this bill. Thank you for your time and attention to our members' concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

**Food Industry Alliance of New York State, Inc.**  
**Jay M. Peltz, General Counsel and Vice President of Government Relations**  
**Metro Office: 914-833-1002**  
**jay@fiany.com**



---

**Statement of AAA New York, Inc. before the New York City Council Committee on Transportation**

**New York, NY – June 30, 2014**

Good afternoon. My name is Alec Slatky, and I represent AAA New York, which serves a membership of over 1.6 million drivers in 22 counties of New York State, and over 570,000 drivers in the 5 boroughs of New York City. I am here to testify in favor of Intro. 20, which would allow drivers to park in an alternate side zone if they are ready to move the vehicle when the street sweeper approaches or if the street has already been swept.

The phrase “commonsense legislation” is en vogue nowadays, but rarely have I heard a bill more apt for the term. Alternate side parking regulations allow the streets to be cleaned. Once the streets are cleaned, the regulations no longer apply. We move our cars so the street sweepers can come. Once the street sweepers have passed, we move our cars back. The logic is so simple that a five-year old could understand it.

Imagine closing a neighborhood playground for cleaning for 90 minutes, leaving a bunch of children to wait outside the fence. The playground is cleaned in 30 minutes, so the kids are ready to start playing, but then they are told they have to wait for another hour – even though the park will just be empty for that time. The kids would know there’s no logic in that decision.

The analogy applies to alternate side parking. Once the street is ready for parking, parking should be allowed. There are real costs to not following such an obvious course of action.

First, the opportunity cost of the time spent dealing with the hassle of alternate side parking is massive. If we could save thirty minutes of New Yorkers’ time, twice a week, that would add up to thousands more hours to be spent with family, working from home, running errands, engaging in leisurely pursuits, or even grabbing a quick catnap in the City that Never Sleeps. In short, this loss of social benefits and economic productivity due to inefficient alternate side parking regulations likely sums to millions of dollars.

There are additional costs to inaction. A New York City DOT study from Park Slope in 2008 found that “traffic volumes were 19% higher between 8 AM and 9 AM on days ASP was in effect, as compared with days that ASP was not in effect.”<sup>1</sup> Another study found that alternate side parking increased vehicle miles traveled by 7.1%.<sup>2</sup> Increased congestion makes the roads more dangerous for all users, delays drivers who are not parking in the immediate vicinity, and pollutes the air – ironic for a program that wants to keep our City clean.

Another major cost to drivers is financial. Alternate side parking violations totaled \$70 million in 2013. Of course, if you break the rules, you should get a ticket. But if the rules don’t make sense, and complying with them is needlessly burdensome, shouldn’t we fix them and cut people a break? This is a major quality of life issue that causes immense aggravation for New Yorkers, and their government has a chance to show it is responsive.

I'm not saying there are no benefits to alternate side parking. It has produced humor, including a Seinfeld episode ("these pretzels are making me thirsty") and a witticism from author Calvin Trillin: "You can park your car on the streets of New York, or you can have a full time job, but you can't possibly do both." It has promoted intercultural understanding: only the suspension of alternate-side parking restrictions can make a Christian praise the observance of Idul-Fitr, a Muslim break-fast at the end of Ramadan; a Muslim extol the virtues of Sukkot, a Jewish harvest holiday; a Jew wax poetic about Diwali, a Hindu/Sikh/Jain festival of lights; and a Hindu note the significance of the Feast of the Assumption.

All kidding aside, alternate side parking does serve a valuable purpose: keeping our streets clean. The Department of Sanitation has done an exemplary job, and we don't wish to revert back to having dirty streets throughout the City. But there is ample room for improvement.

It's 2014. We're in New York City. We have a burgeoning tech sector right in the five boroughs that is ready to innovate. Can't we come up with an app that drivers can download that tells them whether a particular street has been cleaned? It could be GPS-based or based on a particular route, and the driver of the street sweeper could stop at the end of every block or every few blocks to press a button to indicate that a street has been cleaned and is safe to park on. In the rare case where the street sweeper needs to return due to a delivery truck blocking its path, there could be a button that indicates as much. I'm no programming expert, but my gut tells me some local whiz kid could code this in a few months, if not less.

This would resolve lots of possible objections, the most obvious of which is how will people know when the street sweeper has passed? In testimony from 2010, John Nucatola stated that some sweepers will drive down a road en route to another block, but not actually clean that street, so people could get confused and believe that street has been cleaned. An app would avoid this confusion. It would likewise resolve the problem of communicating with traffic agents, who would know not to ticket a particular block, and a record of these indications would provide a defense to faulty tickets.

Perhaps it would not be as easy for people without smartphones to realize when the street has been cleaned, but they would be tipped off by the return of others – which is the same reason why Intro. 20 wouldn't lead to *more* illegal alternate side parking as a gamble that the sweeper has already passed. The app, as well as the presence of other cars, would inform a driver whether a block is available.

One of the Department of Sanitation's concerns with Intro. 20 is that it reserves the right to return to a street if it has not been fully cleaned. This app would maintain that flexibility by allowing street sweepers to indicate that a road is not fully cleaned. John Nucatola testified four years ago that street sweepers "rarely" exercise this right, in any case. There are three possible unhappy implications of this concern. (1) It is possible that Sanitation would plan to return to an unfinished street after the alternate side regulations have been lifted, which doesn't make sense. If so, the streets would be lined with parked cars anyway. (2) If Sanitation plan to leave ten or fifteen minutes at the end of a shift to return to potentially unfinished streets, and exercises this right "rarely," then current regulations are ten to fifteen minutes too long for what the Department actually does, and thus already unnecessarily inconvenience people. (3) This concern is seemingly legitimate but actually unreasonable, designed to maintain the ineffective status quo for its own sake.

The last concern is most insidious but really the only one remaining if such an app is implemented: money. Not only would the City lose a big chunk of the \$70 million worth of alternate side parking

regulations, but developing, implementing, and operating the proposed app would cost money. But this is an investment in the quality of life of our citizens. Inaction, in the face of overwhelming Council and public support, would either demonstrate unfortunate bureaucratic inertia or a concession that alternate side parking regulations are largely designed to generate revenue. Both options are unacceptable.

The Department of Sanitation does not ticket people who are waiting in their cars, ready to move when the street sweeper comes, so it should have no objection to codifying this policy for other traffic agents. Similarly, it does not ticket people who re-park on a street that has been cleaned, so if the communication barrier can be overcome between the Department, the traffic agents, and the public, there should be no objection to codifying this policy as well.

Is this change going to be a snap of the fingers? Of course not. Even with a change that is so patently logical, there are bureaucratic hurdles to jump, pilot programs to run, public education campaigns to conduct, and many other steps. But it's not rocket science. This is something New York City can do to make tens of thousands of lives easier. Let's do it.

I would like to thank Councilman Rodriguez, his co-sponsors, and the Transportation Committee, for bringing this bill to the public's attention and for granting me the opportunity to comment.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/asp\\_parkslope.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/asp_parkslope.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://jpe.sagepub.com/content/33/1/34.full#xref-fn-20-1>

**TESTIMONY OF  
PAUL VISCONTI, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF CLEANING OPERATIONS  
NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION  
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2014 – 10:00 A.M.  
CITY HALL – COMMITTEE ROOM**

**Intro No. 20 - A LOCAL LAW to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to allowing vehicles to park on the restricted side of the street which is subject to alternate side parking rules without being ticketed if the owner is in the vehicle and able to move it or if the street has already been cleaned**

Good morning Chair Rodriguez and members of the Committee on Transportation. I am Paul Visconti, Assistant Chief of Cleaning Operations for the New York City Department of Sanitation. I am here today to testify on Intro No. 20 under consideration today by the Committee. With me on his last day before retirement is Douglas Marsiglia, the Department's current Chief of Cleaning, who will join me in answering your questions. Also joining us here this morning is Inspector Dennis Fulton, Chief of Transportation, and Captain Richard Avignone, Executive Officer, Traffic Enforcement District for NYPD.

As written, Intro No. 20 would authorize drivers to park their vehicles in the parking road lane scheduled for street cleaning so long as the driver is occupying the vehicle and ready to move it when the Department's mechanical broom arrives. Intro No. 20 would also allow drivers to re-park their vehicles in the parking road lane before the 90-minute street cleaning segment expires provided the mechanical broom operator has cleaned the street. The Department appreciates the intent of the bill to make on-street parking available more quickly for motorists, but respectfully opposes this bill for the reasons I will explain.

Since the early 1950s, the Department has provided mechanical broom cleaning along the parking lanes of roadways in 54 of the City's 59 community districts for health and environmental reasons. Litter accumulation in the curbs and streets is unsightly and attracts rodents and creates a health nuisance. Rain and melting snow carries street litter into the sewer catch basins, becoming floatables that can pollute the City's waterways and beaches. Noxious odors caused by unknown sources, as well as parked vehicles that accidentally leak motor oil or other fluids onto the curbsides, are sprayed, scrubbed and cleaned by the Department's mechanical brooms.

Litter-free and odor-free streets enhance the aesthetic appearance of street blocks, and significantly improve the quality of life in such communities. Street cleanliness also promotes a

positive image of the City that boosts tourism and attracts new businesses which help our City's economy. The responsibility for clean streets in New York City's neighborhoods rests on the Department's uniformed men and women, who work with pride to deliver essential sanitation services daily to every community across the City.

The Department schedules a daily average of 196 mechanical brooms to sweep nearly 6,000 linear miles of City streets in 54 districts. Our strategic approach of assigning personnel and equipment to regular 90-minute street cleaning segments, combined with other cleaning programs and enforcement, has resulted in consistently high scorecard ratings of City streets. Despite their lack of popularity with the public, the importance of the City's alternate side parking rules cannot be understated. They were created for the distinct purpose of providing unobstructed curbside accessibility to the Department's mechanical broom operators in order to spray and clean the curbside areas in parking lanes.

An average street cleaning route consists of twelve curb miles per 90-minute segment. For mechanical broom operators, vehicular traffic inadvertently becomes a part of the 90-minute route, such as school buses stopped temporarily to pick up or let off children, or private delivery trucks temporarily standing to deliver early morning packages or to deliver fuel to residences. These slow down the progress of the broom considerably. This traffic sometimes requires the sanitation worker to maneuver the mechanical broom in and around these vehicles, whose operators are simply trying to do their job too, and greatly impedes the broom operator's ability to clean the entire segment within 90 minutes safely. Add to this vehicles parked at the curb whose owners either forgot or chose not to move them, or attended by motorists talking on their cell phones or waiting to pick up a passenger who refuse to move from the broom path, and the challenge for the Department broom operator to complete all of his or her routes on time becomes even greater.

In recent years and working with the Council, the Department has adopted several changes to its street cleaning program to help minimize some of the program's effects on vehicle owners. The list of ASP holiday suspensions has grown significantly from the original twelve holidays, and use of the green stickers on the rear side windows was discontinued. We also suspend street cleaning during the winter season even when there's as little as two inches of snowfall predicted. We've also reduced the street cleaning frequency schedule in five sanitation districts from twice a week cleaning per side, to once a week cleaning per side. The single largest change to our program was when the Department reduced street cleaning hours from 3 hours to just 90 minutes in residential areas, and from one hour to just 30 minutes along metered commercial curb areas early in the morning before store-owners customarily open their businesses. Any modification to the City's current alternate side parking rules must be carefully considered by weighing the benefits of community street cleanliness against the erosion of regulations that were purposefully put in place to ensure the Department is able to effectively clean the City's roadways. Ultimately, the Department's primary objective is to keep and maintain high standards of street cleanliness. It is not to issue summonses.

Turning now to Intro No. 20, the first part of this bill would prohibit the issuance of a summons to a person sitting inside a vehicle when the mechanical broom approaches. There is a misconception that the Department automatically issues parking tickets to persons sitting in their vehicle when the mechanical broom operator approaches. This is simply not true, and we want to make clear to this Committee that the Department does not issue summonses when the vehicle is occupied by an operator who will readily move his or her vehicle. When a sanitation worker operating the broom observes somebody sitting in a car ahead in the broom's cleaning path, the sanitation worker alerts the person that the broom is approaching by honking the horn, and often the person moves the vehicle cooperatively. If a sanitation supervisor proceeds ahead of the broom operator to ensure curbside accessibility, the supervisor will courteously ask the person sitting in the vehicle to move the vehicle so the broom operator can access the curb for cleaning.

The only time a Department supervisor will issue a summons is when the operator, on request by the supervisor, refuses to move his or her vehicle from the path of the broom. In some areas of the City where the ASP fine is set at \$45.00, a vehicle operator may choose not to move the vehicle and accept the penalty, rather than paying a significantly higher charge to move the vehicle to a private parking garage or lot. Consequently, the broom operator is forced to move around the parked vehicle of an uncooperative motorist in addition to other vehicles temporarily standing and obstructing the broom path.

We also believe two unintended and detrimental effects of this provision were overlooked. Persons allowed to sit in their vehicles awaiting the mechanical broom to arrive will naturally run their engine during winter and summer months for heating and air-conditioning in violation of the City's traffic idling law. Given the important vehicle emissions reductions achieved in the City over the past decade, we believe Intro No. 20 conveys the wrong message by encouraging persons to sit outside in their vehicles that they would be compelled to run for their own comfort, thus erasing the gains made in achieving cleaner air quality especially in high density neighborhoods.

Additionally, permitting attended vehicles to remain parked at the curbside until the mechanical broom arrives will result in those vehicles moving into and occupying the driving lane until the broom operator completes the block. Not only will this obstruct the free flow of traffic, but it will jeopardize public safety if emergency vehicles are unable to pass, particularly on narrower streets.

The second provision of Intro No. 20 prohibits the issuance of a summons to the vehicle owner if the street has been cleaned and the vehicle is re-parked at the curb before the 90-minute cleaning segment expires. We caution the Committee against loosening the current restriction and insist that curbside accessibility remain available to the broom operator for the full 90-minute period. First, the Department must reserve itself the discretion to return back to any street block along the route to service a previously obstructed dirty area that the broom operator could not service earlier due to an obstruction, such as moving vans loading or unloading, fuel trucks making oil deliveries to homes, or vehicles that were not moved at the

onset of the route. Ensuring unimpeded access becomes compromised if motorists are allowed to re-park their vehicles before the 90-minute period expires.

Additionally, along moderate to heavy tree-lined streets during the autumn season, the Department must send out two mechanical brooms to collect the large volume of leaves that accumulate in the streets despite the best efforts by many residents to sweep up and contain the leaves. Because the mechanical brooms end up picking up large amounts of leaves, the brooms often fill up quickly, thus requiring the use of a second broom to pass over the same street blocks to capture the remaining leaves and street litter, and re-clean the curbsides. Motorists who re-park their vehicles may only observe the first broom pass, unaware that a second broom will return to finish servicing the block and run the risk of receiving a summons.

The Department also believes that allowing this practice would cause undue confusion among vehicle owners since they would not know whether their block was already serviced during the cleaning segment, or if the Department is returning for a second sweep. Apart from its current GPS availability which currently works within a 1 to 3 hour range, the Department does not currently possess advanced technology to provide broom cleaning information via the Department's website in up-to-the-minute real time. Moreover, the Police Department is currently unable to ascertain when a Department broom has passed the first time or when the broom will return a second time during the cleaning segment.

While our uniformed supervisors would not issue summonses to those drivers who re-park their vehicles at the curb if the street was completely serviced, we caution the public against doing so and object to codifying such practice into law under Intro No. 20.

For all of the reasons I have highlighted, the Department of Sanitation must oppose Intro No. 20. We will be happy to answer any questions you have.





# Affordable Transit, Affordable New York

Guaranteeing the Transit Tax Break for  
Employees and Businesses

April 27, 2014

A Report by the Riders Alliance  
Principal Author: Benjamin Lowe

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: TAX SAVINGS FOR RIDERS AND BUSINESSES

Federal tax law allows workers to pay for up to \$130 per month of their public transit costs before taxes, the same way they pay for health insurance premiums or retirement contributions. This means big savings for transit riders: the average New Yorker who makes the city's median income and buys a \$112 monthly Metrocard through an employer-provided commuter benefits program could **save \$443 a year**.

Employers save, too: companies don't pay taxes on the money their employees spend pre-tax on public transit because employee gross taxable income is reduced. **Businesses can save about \$103 per year in tax liability** for every employee who buys monthly Metrocards through the company's commuter benefit program.

But only New Yorkers whose employers offer transit benefits have access to these savings. If an employer decides not to offer transit benefits, there is no way for their employees to participate—because of federal law, workers cannot sign up for the program on their own. It is estimated that more than a million eligible New Yorkers do not have transit benefits **simply because their employers do not offer them**.

New Yorkers don't need to continue losing out on transit benefits. There is a simple, proven way the City can help hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers save money, decrease tax liability for businesses and keep tens of millions of dollars in the local economy: **by guaranteeing that companies with 20 or more employees offer transit benefits**. A transit benefits guarantee could give an additional 605,000 New Yorkers access to these savings and keep at least an **additional \$85 million in the local economy**.

An average New Yorker who buys monthly Metrocards through a transit benefits program could save

**\$443**  
every year.

Employers who offer the benefit can save

**\$103**  
per employee every year.

But currently,

**1 million**

people who live and work in New York don't have access to transit benefits.

Requiring businesses with 20+ employees to offer transit benefits would make them available to up to

**605,000**

more New Yorkers, and would keep more than

**\$85 million**

in New York City's economy each year.

## TRANSIT BENEFITS: GOOD FOR NEW YORK'S WORKERS

New Yorkers rely on public transit: Each weekday, New Yorkers take more than 7.8 million rides on the bus and subway.<sup>1</sup> And when one of New York's train and bus riders pays out-of-pocket at a MTA booth or vending machine, they've likely had to pay income tax on the money they use. For instance, an average New Yorker buying a \$112 monthly transit pass has already spent around \$36 in federal income tax on that money before it even made it into their paycheck.

Fortunately, there is a federal program that lets commuters hold on to that money. The **federal transit benefit program (IRC Sec. 132 (f))** lets transit users save hundreds of dollars per year by paying for transit fare through their employers on a pre-tax basis, the same way people pay premiums on employer-provided health insurance or for certain retirement contributions. An employee at a business offering transit benefits can set aside up to \$130 of their paycheck toward their transit costs each month, reducing their gross taxable income by the amount they set aside.

This means that a New Yorker making the median wage and buying \$112 monthly transit passes will **save \$443 per year.**<sup>2</sup> A New Yorker spending more per month—for instance, commuting by express bus—can sign up for the maximum benefit amount of \$130 per month and **save \$514 per year.**<sup>3</sup> These numbers are averages based on New York City's median wage; each transit rider's own savings depend on his or her earnings, tax filings, and transit usage. Not surprisingly, the program is popular: it is estimated that around **750,000 transit riders who both live and work in New York currently take advantage of transit benefits.**<sup>4</sup>

---

1 "Subway and Bus Ridership," New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority.  
<http://web.mta.info/nyct/facts/ridership/index.htm>

2 Savings estimates derived from the TransitChek benefits calculator.  
<http://pages.transitchek.com/calculatesavings/english/index230cap.html>

3 Such results are typical, but actual savings will vary and depends on the cost of transit options, the specifics of one's tax status, and other such factors.

4 All aggregate figures in this report reflect the population of individuals who are both employed *and* reside in New York City, or relevant subsets thereof. Estimates including additional *non*-residents of New York City who use or would be eligible for transit benefits (not included in this analysis) would be significantly larger.

## GOOD FOR NEW YORK'S EMPLOYERS

The program is popular with employers, too. Not only does it allow them to offer employees a money-saving benefit for free, but it saves employers hundreds of dollars a year too by reducing their payroll tax burden. For every dollar an employee spends on pre-tax transit benefits, an employer can save up to 7.65¢ in avoided federal payroll tax. This means that an employee making the median New York City salary and regularly buying monthly public transit passes using transit benefits will **save their employer about \$103 every year.**

Enrolling in and administering transit benefits is easy for employers: many payroll and benefits vendors will take care of almost the entire process, integrating transit benefits with tax compliance and payroll management services. Metrocards can then be mailed to the employer or directly to employees, or fare money can be deposited into electronic accounts with special transit debit cards that can be used at MTA vending machines.

## GOOD FOR NEW YORK CITY'S ECONOMY

In addition to bringing tax savings to employers and employees, transit benefits also benefit New York City's economy. Money saved by both employers and employees is retained in the local economy: for the sake of simplicity, if we assume that all 750,000 New Yorkers currently receiving transit benefits buy monthly passes, then each year they **keep about \$420 million in the local economy.**<sup>5</sup>

Commuter benefits also help the city's transit system by increasing the number of New Yorkers using public transportation: a 2004 study by the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies found that New York City workplaces that offer transit benefits saw a **16% increase in the number of employees using public transit to get to work, and**

---

<sup>5</sup> The number would be lower if people buy only partial fares, and higher if they take full advantage of the legal maximum benefit of \$130 monthly; that detailed data on usage is proprietary and not publicly available

**24% increase in overall transit use.**<sup>6</sup> This increase means the MTA collects more fares, while the number of single-occupant commuter vehicles on New York City's roads decreases.

## **GUARANTEEING AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO BENEFITS**

Unfortunately, while transit benefits are hugely beneficial to employees, employers, and the city as a whole, many New Yorkers still don't have access to these benefits. Only employees whose employers decide to offer transit benefits can get access to them. Hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are getting shortchanged, and millions of dollars are needlessly leaving New York City's economy. Even those transit riders who use transit benefits today can't rely on them in the future, because there is no guarantee they will have access to benefits if they change jobs, or if their current employer decides to stop offering the program.

There is a simple step that can be taken, however, to extend transit benefits to hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, protect the benefits of millions more, and keep tens of millions of dollars in New Yorkers' paychecks. It's a policy that has been successfully implemented elsewhere, and has earned the support of transportation, civic, and business organizations alike:

**The City of New York should require all businesses with 20 employees or more to offer commuter benefits to their employees.**

## **OUR ANALYSIS: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSED BILL**

The Riders Alliance has compiled and analyzed data from the US Census, the MTA, non-profit organization TransitCenter, and industry experts from a number of companies that administer transit benefits in order to estimate the impact of guaranteeing transit benefits to New Yorkers working at companies with 20 or more employees.

---

6 TCRP Report 107: Analyzing the Effectiveness of Commuter Benefits Programs, Appendix C. Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, October 2005. [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_webdoc\\_27.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_webdoc_27.pdf)

Little direct data exists on the availability and usage of transit benefits in New York City. There are no direct, public sources of data, for instance, on how many businesses currently offer transit benefits, and how many employees to whom they are available utilize them, nor is it known, either on average or in aggregate, how much is spent through the program. Some survey-based research has been done in recent years to determine transit benefits availability at companies of different sizes. That research had a small sample size, and aggregated data between multiple major US cities, making precise New York City-specific calculations challenging.

Nonetheless, by analyzing statistical data about the current availability and utilization of transit benefits, and combining a number of resources detailing the distribution of employees at New York City businesses of different sizes, we have generated a forecast that generates, with as high a level of accuracy as possible given the resources available, a picture of the likely economic benefit to the employees and employers of New York City.

Our analysis shows that such a regulation will have immediate, meaningful benefits for New York City, extending access to transit benefits to as many as 605,000 more New Yorkers. Based on previous experience, **more than 150,000 newly eligible New Yorkers** would choose to take advantage of transit benefits, **keeping at least \$85 million from leaving the local economy**. The requirement would also protect the benefits available to 2.7 million New Yorkers in all, guaranteeing that the benefits offered by their employers would never go away.<sup>7</sup>

It should be noted that, in addition to federal tax savings, part of the money commuters save comes from state and city taxes. We estimate that at least \$6 million would come from reduced New York City tax revenues, and at least \$10 million would come from reduced state tax revenue. In exchange for these reductions, however, not only would tens of millions of dollars be saved each year by New Yorkers, but it would also enter the

---

7 See "Usage projections" in the Appendix.

economy in a way that directly encourages increased use of—and spending toward—public transit.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **SCOPE**

For this analysis, we conservatively decided only to include workers who both live and work in New York City. An expansion of transit benefits would also benefit individuals who commute into New York City, individuals who live in a household where a family member can newly access transit benefits, and the broader regional economy—all of which are in addition to the estimates included in this report.

### **CALCULATIONS**

In order to estimate the number of individuals who would newly be able to access transit benefits, as well as the average savings per person, average savings for employers, and projected total amount of money saved in New York City, we extrapolated from data provided by the U.S. Census, the MTA, the nonprofit TransitCenter, and transit benefits providers who calculate savings estimates free of charge for prospective customers. We then used this data to estimate how many individuals are currently at companies with more than 20 employees who do not have access to benefits and would gain them under the proposed regulation. From this, we were able to extrapolate the likely economic impact of extending benefits to these employees.

*Please see [www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits](http://www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits) for a detailed methodology that walks through each of these calculations.*

## PRIOR EXPERIENCE: TRANSIT BENEFITS GUARANTEE IS ALREADY A PROVEN SUCCESS

In requiring employers with 20 or more employees to offer transit benefits, the City of New York will be supporting a program that is not only popular in the New York area, but was, in fact, created in the first place to address New York's transportation challenges. In 1987, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey launched TransitChek, the first program in the nation to allow employers to provide transit vouchers to their employees as a tax-free subsidy.

This program and others like it were instantly and immensely popular, seeing not only rapid growth within New York City, but also expansion to other cities in the Northeast and eventually nationwide.<sup>8</sup>

Seeing the value that pre-tax transit benefits provide to employees, employers, and the local economy, some cities have begun to require that businesses with more than twenty employees offer these benefits. In 2009, San Francisco passed such a requirement with the strong support of civic, environmental, and business groups. The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, for instance, declared,

*"While the Chamber generally opposes mandates on business, the city's newest requirement that businesses with 20 or more employees working in San Francisco establish a program to promote the use of public transit can be an economic benefit. In addition to helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by getting people out of cars and onto transit, the law can be a money-saver for businesses."<sup>9</sup>*

---

8 TransitChek in the New York and Philadelphia Areas," US Department of Transportation, October 1995. <http://ntl.bts.gov/lib/5000/5500/5567/6961.pdf>

9 Transit Ordinance Toolbox, hosted by Edenred. <http://www.transitbenefitordinance.com/FAQs.html>



San Francisco's program is so popular that other cities in the region opted to adopt similar requirement for their businesses. Richmond and Berkeley, also in California, require companies of 10 or more employees to provide the benefit. And in March of 2014, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District adopted a regulation mandating that, in all nine Bay Area counties, a region with a population of 7.2 million people,<sup>10</sup> businesses with 50 employees or more must offer transit benefits to their employees.<sup>11</sup>

## CONCLUSION: GUARANTEE TRANSIT BENEFITS IN NYC

New York City should act quickly to guarantee transit benefits to workers at businesses with 20 or more employees. New York's economy is needlessly losing money it could be holding onto by passing this requirement. Meanwhile, public transit costs are going up for riders: the MTA has two fare increases scheduled in the next three years that would raise costs for regular transit users by \$110 a year.<sup>12</sup> Passing this requirement is a measure the City can take now to make transit more affordable for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

Additionally, the impact of increasing participation in the transit benefits program will be felt far beyond the city limits. This analysis only considers those individuals who live *and* work in New York City, but hundreds of thousands of non-residents commute into the city to work. Those who work at companies with 20 or more employees would have transit benefits guaranteed to them as well, encouraging regional transit use and keeping even more money in the regional economy.

---

10 The Bay Area Census, MTC-ABAG Library. <http://www.bayareacensus.ca.gov/bayarea.htm>

11 "Transit bucks for commuters coming to Bay Area workers by Sept. 30," Denis Cuff, *Contra Costa Times*, March 26, 2014. [http://www.mercurynews.com/cj\\_25425889/new-commuter-benefit-coming-bay-area-workers-by](http://www.mercurynews.com/cj_25425889/new-commuter-benefit-coming-bay-area-workers-by)

12 "M.T.A. Sees Smaller Fare Increases in '15 and '17," Matt Flegenheimer, *The New York Times*, November 13, 2013. [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/nyregion/mta-sees-smaller-rise-for-its-fares-in-15-and-17.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/14/nyregion/mta-sees-smaller-rise-for-its-fares-in-15-and-17.html?_r=0)

Two 4% increases, as reported, would be an aggregate increase of 8.16%. An 8.16% increase on a \$112 monthly transit pass would be an increase of \$9.14 per month, or \$109.67 per year, which we have rounded to the nearest dollar.

The impact of such an expansion would be felt nationally, too. In January of 2014, the United States Congress let the maximum allowable monthly pre-tax benefit fall from \$245 to \$130 while keeping it at the higher level for parking, functionally favoring car drivers over transit riders.<sup>13</sup> This decision negatively impacts those New York City businesses with employees commuting into the city via commuter rail whose monthly transit expenditures are well beyond the current benefit cap.

Expanding the number of people who receive transit benefits can send a powerful message to Washington that transit benefits are a program worth investing in—and should the cap be restored to \$245, it would mean tens of millions more dollars staying in the hands of New York City businesses and employees.

**For the sake of New York's employers, employees, transit system, and the local economy, New York City should act now to expand and protect transit benefits.**

---

13 "Tax benefits for mass transit commuters set to drop," Jia Lynn Yang and T. Rees Shapiro, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/tax-benefits-for-mass-transit-commuters-set-to-drop/2013/12/26/77e1d348-6e5a-11e3-aecc-85cb037b7236\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/tax-benefits-for-mass-transit-commuters-set-to-drop/2013/12/26/77e1d348-6e5a-11e3-aecc-85cb037b7236_story.html)

# New York Employers Support Transit Benefits and Intro 295

June 30, 2014

Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Chairman Ydanis Rodriguez  
250 Broadway, Suite 1731  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito and Chairman Rodriguez:

We are companies and organizations with offices in New York City who provide pre-tax transit benefits to our employees. We write in support of Intro 295, which would guarantee that employers with 20 or more employees provide their staff the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to pay for public transportation.

Pre-tax transit benefits can make New York more affordable for millions of transit riders—and for the companies that employ them. The average New Yorker making the median wage and utilizing a monthly MetroCard can save almost \$450 each year by using pre-tax transit benefits. Employers save money too—all the wages that employees set aside for transit are untaxed for employers as well.

But riders can only take advantage of this benefit if their employers offer it.

A Riders Alliance report estimates that Intro 295 would make transit benefits available to as many as 605,000 more New Yorkers who do not currently have access to this program. And with more money in the pockets of transit riders, more money will remain in the local economy instead of being sent to Washington as taxes. For the full report, please go to [www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits](http://www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits).

We hope the council will support Intro 295 expeditiously.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

| Name               | Title                  | Company                               |
|--------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Chris Apple        | PR & Marketing Manager | ABW Enterprises, Inc.                 |
| Margery N. Murriel | Office Administrator   | Accounting & Compliance International |
| Lorena J. Zuniga   | Office Manager         | Actual NY Capital Advisors            |
| Kristen Ellison    | VP of Operations       | AJ Wealth                             |
| Yolanda Hunte      | Office Manager         | AMP Capital Investors (US) Limited    |

|                       |                                      |   |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Belina Mizrahi        | General Manager                      | Ars Nova Theater                                |
| Michelle Peck         | HR Assistant                         | Association for Computing Machinery             |
| Marie Tooma           | Office Manager                       | Astor Wines & Spirits                           |
| Russell Murphy        | Finance Associate                    | Ballet Tech Foundation                          |
| Phyllis Giongetti     | Bookkeeper                           | Benhar Office Interiors                         |
| JOCLYN STERN          | Accounts Specialist & Fiscal Officer | Brooklyn Children's Museum                      |
| Steven Kutrick        | Facilities Manager                   | Carey New York                                  |
| Laura Matte           | Business Development                 | Carrington Fox USA, Inc.                        |
| Anthony Vernaci       | HR Manager                           | Cater to You                                    |
| Mimi Kim              | Director, Finance                    | Centric Digital                                 |
| John C. Hume          | Company Manager                      | CLASSIC STAGE COMPANY                           |
| Yvonne Roche          | Payroll Manager                      | CMA Consulting Services                         |
| Connie A. Santa Maria | <i>Administrator</i>                 | Collazo Florentino & Keil LLP                   |
| Bernard Campbell      | Vice President - Director of Finance | Commune Hotels and Resorts LLC                  |
| Edwin D. Acevedo      | Director of Administration           | Cornell University – ILR Extension (NYC)        |
| Mauricio Perez-Rosas  | Office Manager                       | David Mexico Design Group LLC                   |
| Tricia Burgess        | Human Resources Manager              | DWI Holdings, Inc/Divatex Home Fashions, Inc    |
| Debra Gambino         | Vice President of Finance            | Dynamic Resources                               |
| Arthur Kipel          | Director of Finance                  | Eric J. Smith Architect, PC                     |
| Sandi Cohen           | Controller                           | Excel Guard Corp. and Excel Security Corp.      |
| Ingrid A. Castillo    | Human Resources Administrator        | FABIANI COHEN & HALL, LLP                       |
| JEFF LIANG            | General Affairs                      | FANTAS EYES, INC                                |
| Janet Reinike         | Administrative Assistant             | Farient Advisors LLC                            |
| Patricia Sanfelice    | VP                                   | First Choice Staffing NY Inc.                   |
| Brendan Donohoe       | Operations Manager                   | Frank Hirth LLC                                 |
| Alicia Wlodinguer     | Finance Manager                      | Gardiner & Theobald Inc                         |
| Isaure Renaud         | Human Resources Manager              | G-III Apparel Group, Ltd.                       |
| Sanjay Mirpuri        | Controller                           | Gold Medal International                        |
| Lori Gordon           | Accounting Manager                   | Goldfarb & Fleece LLP                           |
| Soojin Yi             | Office Manager                       | H ARCHITECTURE                                  |
| John B. Negrón        | Vice-President                       | H&H of the AMERICAS CORP/LEON VAN LEEUWEN CORP. |
| Suzanna Brehoczky     | HR/Facilities Manager                | Hampshire Group Limited                         |
| Raj Baron             | Treasury Analyst                     | Heraeus Inc.                                    |
| Thea Vardakis         | Office Manager                       | Hudson Meridian Construction                    |

|                            |  | Group   |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Josephine Wong             | HR Director                            | Imagine Early Learning Centers                          |
| Mitchell J. Smilowitz, CPA | Chief Executive Officer                | Joint Retirement Board                                  |
| Michelle Dotti             | Human Resources & Benefits Manager     | Ladas & Parry LLP                                       |
| Santana Burns              | Operations Manager                     | LAK Public Relations, Inc.                              |
| Shane Cumming              | Vice President of Sales                | Lectra  |
| Indira Seenauth-Fraser     | SENIOR Accountant                      | Local 420, AFSCME                                       |
| Teresa Maletich            | H.R. Manager                           | Logistic Innovations                                    |
| Denise Palella             | Payroll Manager                        | LS Power Development, LLC/Luminus Management, LLC       |
| Brittany Koper             | Human Resources Director               | Maesa, LLC  |
| Kelley Dolan               | Director of Human Resources/Facilities | Maxons Restorations, Inc.                               |
| Douglas McAlinden          | CEO                                    | McAlinden Associates, Inc.                              |
| Boris Vernikov             | Office Manager                         | Metro Loft Management, LLC                              |
| Madeline E. Placencia      | Human Resources Manager                | Mogil Organization, LLC                                 |
| Sharon DeSanti             | Office Manager                         | Monday Properties                                       |
| Lini Bansi                 | Payroll Manager                        | nextSource, Inc   |
| Emily Bogovic              | HR Associate                           | Nippon Life Insurance Company of America                |
| Donna J. Lockwood          | VP – HR                                | NorthEast Community Bank                                |
| Joanna Benjamin            | Administration & Finance Coordinator   | Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation              |
| Roslyn Allison             | Finance Officer                        | Office of the Appellate Defender                        |
| Ron Devereaux              | Treasurer                              | Pico Mfg Sales Corp.                                    |
| Marty Litt                 | Pres.                                  | Pico Mfg Sales Corp.                                    |
| Craig Litt                 | VP                                     | Pico Mfg Sales Corp.                                    |
| Leonard Nangle             | Bookkeeper                             | Precise Corporate Printing, Inc DBA Precise Continental |
| Lisa Chandler              | Executive Assistant / Office Manager   | RAVSAK: The Jewish Community Day School Network         |
| Julia Terry                | Finance Manager                        | Real Data Management                                    |
| Jeannie Hurley             | Controller                             | Red and White Fleet                                     |
| Barbara Marshall           | Office Manager/Bookkeeper              | Regal Literary  |
| Violet Huba                | HR Assistant                           | Richards Kibbe & Orbe LLP                               |
| Noelle Obermueller         | Director of Human Resources            | RICHARDS KIBBE & ORBE LLP                               |
| Kate Narkiewicz            | Controller                             | Roy Herzl, Inc.   |
| Linda Spezzacatena         | Building Administrator                 | Sandhurst Associates as Manager                         |

|                        |  |   |
|------------------------|--|---|
|                        |  | for "The 633 Third Avenue Condominium"            |
| Helen Tonge            | Manager Accounting & Administration              | Sanyo Shokai New York, Inc.                       |
| Tanisha Madrid-Batista | Business Manager                                 | Software Freedom Law Center                       |
| Martha Goitia          | Accounting Supervisor                            | Steamfitters' Industry Welfare Fund               |
| Sorana Vladu           | Senior Accounting Associate                      | Sumitomo Electric USA Holdings, Inc.              |
| Amy Fiore              | Managing Director                                | TADA! Youth Theater                               |
| Joe Messina            | VP of Operations                                 | Tarr Technology Consulting                        |
| Peter F. Goggi         | President  | Tea Association of the USA, Inc.                  |
| Kirsten Strom          | Operations Manager                               | The Climate Group                                 |
| Steven Weiss           | General Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer | The Roosevelt Investment Group, Inc.              |
| Rhodora Santayana      | Financial Administrator                          | The Schwab House                                  |
| Janet Balines          | Assistant Controller                             | The Sherry-Netherland Hotel                       |
| Abid Hussain           | Operation Manager                                | United Bank Limited                               |
| Erin Murphy            | Managing Director                                | WB Engineering & Consulting, PLLC                 |
| Scott Widmeyer         | Founder & Managing Partner                       | Widmeyer Communications - A Finn Partners Company |
| Charlotte Sharkowitz   | Accounting Manager                               | Women's Sports Foundation                         |



## Subway and Bus Riders Support Intro 295

June 30, 2014

Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Chairman Ydanis Rodriguez  
250 Broadway, Suite 1731  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito and Chairman Rodriguez:

We are subway and bus riders writing in support of Intro 295 of 2014. This legislation would help more New Yorkers save hundreds of dollars a year on public transportation.

Everything in New York City is costly – and public transportation is no exception. Fares have gone up four times in six years and are set to increase again in 2015. Paying over \$1300 each year on public transportation is a burden for riders, particularly for low-income and middle class families.

But something can be done to effectively reduce fares: the City Council can adopt legislation (Intro 295), which would ensure that employers with 20 or more employees provide their staff the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to pay for transit service.

When riders purchase a monthly MetroCard with pre-tax dollars, we can save hundreds of dollars of year. The average New Yorker earning the median wage can expect to save almost \$450 a year with pre-tax transit benefits. But we can only take advantage of this benefit if our employers offer it.

Unfortunately, many employers throughout New York City do not. And many of us are left without the opportunity to save hundreds of dollars a year on public transit.

A recent report from the Riders Alliance estimated that Intro 295 would change that by making up to 605,000 more New Yorkers eligible for this tax break. If this bill passes, hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers will have extra money in their pocket each month to spend on necessities.

**We hope the Council will pass Intro 295 soon.**

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation that could make New York more affordable for hundreds of thousands of transit riders.

Sincerely,

Members of the Riders Alliance, including:

Tolani Adeboye  
Brooklyn

Dupe Ajayi  
Brooklyn

Zachary Arcidiacono  
Queens

Andrew Carr  
Manhattan

Annemarie Caruso  
Queens

David Estrada  
Brooklyn

Mala Hertz  
Manhattan

Lauren Houston  
Queens

Patty Hutton  
Brooklyn

Rhode al Khani  
Brooklyn

Ben Lowe  
Brooklyn

Connor Mealey  
Queens

Noreen Pederson  
Brooklyn

Lance Polivy  
Manhattan

Katie Reilly  
Queens

Jordan Reisner  
Brooklyn

Alexis Saba  
Brooklyn



## **Transportation, Civic, Environmental and Planning Organizations Support Intro 295**

June 30, 2014

Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Chairman Ydanis Rodriguez  
250 Broadway, Suite 1731  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Mark-Viverito and Chairman Rodriguez:

Our groups—representing transportation, civic, environmental and planning communities—write in support of Intro 295 of 2014. The legislation would save hundreds of dollars for many, many city subway and bus riders.

It's hard to make ends meet in New York City. As Mayor de Blasio often warns, New York has an affordability crisis. And that's particularly true for the cost of getting around town. Subway and bus fares have gone up four times in the past six years. And the price tag for a 30-day unlimited MetroCard has nearly doubled since they were introduced in 1998—from \$63 to \$112!

But something can be done to effectively reduce fares: the City Council can adopt legislation (Intro 295), which would require that employers with 20 or more employees provide their staff the opportunity to use pre-tax earnings to subsidize transit service.

When riders purchase their monthly MetroCard with pre-tax dollars, the average New Yorker earning the median wage can expect to save almost \$450 a year. But employees can only take advantage of this benefit if their employers offer it.

Unfortunately, many employers throughout New York City do not.

Intro 295 would change that, and make up to 605,000 more New Yorkers eligible for this tax break. Additionally, providing this tax break will help employers, because they save money on payroll taxes when their employees use pre-tax transit benefits. A recent report from the Riders Alliance estimated that businesses can save an average of \$103 in federal payroll taxes per year for every employee. For the full report, please see [www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits](http://www.ridersny.org/transitbenefits).

We hope the Council will pass Intro 295 as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation that could make New York more affordable for hundreds of thousands of transit riders.

Best,

Jonathan Bowles  
Center for an Urban Future

Richard Oram  
Fund for the Environment  
and Urban Life (FEUL)

Margaret Newman  
Municipal Art Society

Alex Matthiessen  
Move NY

Gene Russianoff  
NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign

William Henderson  
Permanent Citizens Advisory  
Committee to the MTA

Joan Byron  
Pratt Center for  
Community Development

John Kaehny  
Reinvent Albany

John Raskin  
Riders Alliance

David Bragdon  
TransitCenter

Noah Budnick  
Transportation Alternatives

Ryan Lynch  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign

Jacqueline M. Ebanks  
Women's City Club of New York

David Shuffler  
Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2014

Contact: John Raskin (Riders Alliance) 646-369-8093

David Kimball-Stanley (CM Garodnick) 917-828-6628

## **Report: New City Council Legislation Could Help 605,000 New Yorkers Save Money on Bus and Subway Fares**

**Council Member Dan Garodnick Introduces Affordable Transit  
Act, Would Require Large New York Employers to Offer Pre-Tax  
Transit Benefits to Workers**

### **Legislation Would Save Money for Riders and Businesses**

New York, NY—City Council Member Dan Garodnick announced legislation today that will help hundreds of thousands of transit riders save money on subway and bus fares. The Riders Alliance released a report showing that the legislation would make 605,000 New Yorkers eligible for tax breaks that could save the average New Yorker \$443 every year on transit costs.

The Riders Alliance, as well as transit advocates including the Straphangers Campaign, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, and TransitCenter, urged the City Council to quickly take up and pass Council Member Garodnick's proposed legislation, to make public transit cheaper for hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers before the next expected fare hike goes into effect in early 2015.

**Council Member Dan Garodnick** said, "Allowing people to put aside pre-tax income for mass transit benefits is good public policy. We want to make it as easy as possible for people to participate."

**John Raskin, Executive Director of the Riders Alliance**, said, "This bill could save money for literally hundreds of thousands of transit riders. Fares are supposed to go up again next year, and this is something the City can do to make transit a little more affordable for people who ride it. Transit benefits are a win-win for employers and workers, and they encourage people to use public transportation."

**Gene Russianoff, staff attorney for the NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign**, said, "New York City is notorious for its cost of living, from high-priced milk to costly haircuts to racking up more than \$1300 a year for many daily subway and bus riders. But there's good news for New Yorkers on a tight budget: A federal program cuts hundreds of dollars off yearly transit costs. All you need is get your boss to enroll you in this savings program. Council Member Dan Garodnick's legislation encourages many employers to do just that."

Federal law allows transit riders to save money by paying for up to \$130 in subway and bus fares every month from pre-tax earnings, just like people pay for health insurance or retirement contributions. A New Yorker earning the city's median income could save \$443 every year by taking advantage of this tax break. But workers aren't allowed to take the tax break if their employer doesn't offer it. **Council Member Garodnick's legislation would expand access to these savings by requiring employers of 20 or more people to offer the benefit in New York City.**

## **FACTS ABOUT TRANSIT BENEFITS & COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK'S BILL**

The Riders Alliance report released today estimated that:

- Approximately 1 million people who live and work in NYC do not currently have access to the transit tax break
- Passing Council Member Garodnick's bill would allow 605,000 new people to take advantage of the transit tax break
- An average New Yorker who makes the median wage could save \$443 every year with the transit tax break
- Businesses who sign up save money too: for every employee at the median wage who signs up, businesses can save \$103 every year in taxes
- If the bill is passed, New Yorkers will keep more than \$85 million each year in the local economy instead of spending the money on taxes

How Transit Benefits Work:

- Federal tax law lets transit riders put aside \$130 per month before taxes to pay for transit, just like people set aside pre-tax money for health care and retirement
- According to tax law, it has to be a benefit offered by the employer to qualify
- People who have the tax break get their transit fare through their employer: the most popular ways to do it are to get a pre-paid Metrocard or a debit card that can only be used at MTA vending machines
- Employers can either manage it themselves or sign up with a company that does it for them; employers of 20 or more employees generally save money when they sign up for the program

### How Employees Save Money With Pre-Tax Transit Benefits:

- Employees' taxable income is reduced by however much money they set aside for transit benefits.
- For example, if someone makes \$50,000 annually, but buys a monthly Metrocard and spends \$1,344 each year on transit, she would only report \$48,666 in taxable income to the IRS, and pay taxes only on that lower amount

### How Businesses Save Money With Pre-Tax Transit Benefits:

- Employers only pay payroll taxes on their employees' taxable income
- That means that if an employee sets aside \$1,344 annually to buy a monthly Metrocard, the employer would not have to pay Social Security, Medicare and other payroll taxes on that money
- Even if an employer contracts with an outside company to manage the benefit, the employer usually saves more in tax money than they spend on administering the benefit

Council Member Garodnick's legislation would require firms that have 20 or more employees to offer the transit benefit option to employees in New York City.

### **SUPPORT FROM MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez, Chair of the Transportation Committee,** said, "One of the best ways we can deliver for the residents of New York City is providing tax-free transit benefits, shaving off hundreds of dollars in New Yorkers' annual budgets. If we expand access to this great program that many New Yorkers already enjoy, it will mean more money in people's pockets to be spent on food, housing, clothing and other vital needs. This policy is a game changer and I fully support Council Member Garodnick's initiative. It's time to make it happen."

**Council Member Steve Levin** said, "New Yorkers depend on public transportation each and every day. It is how we get to work, how we see our friends and family, and how we access all that New York City has to offer. Enrolling in pre-tax transit benefits programs saves employees and employers money and encourages the use of public transportation. Expanding this benefit is smart policy and I thank Council Member Garodnick for introducing this legislation."

**Council Member Vincent Gentile** said, "At a time when so many hard working New Yorkers are struggling to make ends meet, we must be doing more to help deal with the staggering cost of living in our City. Allowing more New Yorkers to enroll in a pre-tax transit benefits program, which allows employees to set aside money from their paychecks before paying taxes on it, would save working families hundreds of dollars a year, at little to no cost for employers. I thank my colleague Councilman Dan Garodnick for introducing

this legislation, and the Riders Alliance for their tireless advocacy on behalf of everyone who uses public transit."

**Council Member Helen Rosenthal** said, "The cost of commuting to work adds up fast. By expanding pre-tax transit benefits to all working New Yorkers, we can encourage more people to use public transportation, reduce congestion, and save people hundreds of dollars a year."

### **SUPPORT FROM BUSINESSES, TRANSIT RIDERS AND ADVOCATES**

**Jennifer Brown, the firm administrator at Weiner, Millo, Morgan & Bonanno, LLC**, which has 28 employees, says, "We provide transit benefits to our employees because it enhances our benefit package and saves us and our employees money. Administration of the benefit is quick and easy."

**Nancy Ashbridge, human resource administrator at Gannon Vitolo Contracting, LLC**, which has 27 employees, says, "We are a small General Contracting firm with 26 employees. 12 of our employees participate in the TransitChek benefits. Everyone is very happy with TransitChek as it saves money for the employees and the company. It takes a little to set up but once it's going it's a piece of cake. I would recommend all companies offer this to their employees."

Nancy can be reached at 212-382-4210 and is available to discuss the program.

**Patty Hutton, a member of the Riders Alliance who commutes to work in Manhattan from Bay Ridge**, says, "I've been using transit benefits for almost a decade. It saves me money and it's flexible. I can adjust the amount I put on my card to anticipate changes in use such as vacation. Anything that can help me save money on necessary monthly expenses is helpful these days. I am fortunate to have an employer that provides pre-tax transit benefits."

**Veronica Vanterpool, Executive Director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign**, said, "If employers want to save money, they should enroll in a transit tax benefit program. Not only does it reduce company payroll taxes, it keeps more money in the pockets of transit riding employees. It's advantageous for all."

###

# DAILY NEWS

## **Bill would require businesses to let workers use pretax money for subway fares**

**The legislation, to be introduced by City Councilman Daniel Garodnick (D-Manhattan), would require all businesses with 20 or more workers to allow employees to set aside pretax money for transit costs, under a federal program that some employers participate in voluntarily.**

By Erin Drukin  
April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Workers would be able to pay their subway fares with pretax money under a proposed bill announced Sunday.

City Councilman Daniel Garodnick (D-Manhattan) will introduce legislation requiring all businesses with 20 or more workers to allow employees to set aside pretax money for transit costs, under a federal program that some employers participate in voluntarily.

“Many of us feel like the MTA treats us like a piggy bank. Helping New Yorkers take advantage of this tax benefit is an important way we can put a little more cash in their pockets,” Garodnick said.

City Councilman Daniel Garodnick (D-Manhattan) plans to introduce the legislation. ‘Helping New Yorkers take advantage of this tax benefit is an important way we can put a little more cash in their pockets,’ he says.

The benefit could save the average New Yorker who buys a monthly MetroCard \$443 a year, and the bill will extend it to 605,000 people who don’t currently have it, backers say.

Federal law allows employees to put aside up to \$130 a month before taxes to pay for train and bus fares. A monthly unlimited MetroCard currently costs \$112.

## Neoyorquinos podrían ahorrar cientos de dólares en Metrocard

Por: Juan Matossian  
Abril 28, 2014

Presentan un proyecto legislativo para que los trabajadores no paguen impuestos cuando compren sus pasajes del transporte público

Si usted trabaja en una empresa o negocio con 20 o más empleados, pronto podrá comenzar a ahorrarse cientos de dólares al año en gastos de transporte, si una propuesta es aprobada en el Concejo de la Ciudad de Nueva York.

La iniciativa, introducida por el concejal Dan Garodnick (D – Manhattan), extendería una ley federal que permite a los usuarios de transporte apartar hasta \$130 al mes de sus ingresos antes de impuestos para pagar por sus trayectos diarios, de la misma manera que se hace con el seguro médico o la pensión.

Al dejar de tributar ese dinero, esto se traduciría en que un neoyorquino que gane el salario medio, se ahorrare unos \$450 al año en transporte, de acuerdo a un reporte de la organización Riders Alliance para evaluar el impacto de la medida.

El informe también revela que la extensión de la ley, que hasta ahora se aplica en Nueva York solo a voluntad del empleador, supondría que 605,000 nuevos neoyorquinos se beneficiarían.

“Ayudar a que más personas se puedan beneficiar de este alivio fiscal es un gran manera de poner más dinero en el bolsillo de los neoyorquinos”, dijo este domingo Garodnick en conferencia de prensa. “Queremos que sea lo más sencillo posible participar”.

El objetivo es aprobar la medida antes de 2015, cuando se prevé suba de nuevo el pase mensual de transporte (Metrocard), que ahora cuesta \$112. Serán los propios empleadores los que ofrezcan este alivio fiscal y expliquen su funcionamiento a los empleados.

“Sabemos que es cuestión de tiempo para que suban las tarifas de la MTA (Agencia Metropolitana de Transporte) y está política de ayuda es un gran alivio”, declaró el concejal Ydanis Rodríguez, que preside el Comité de Transporte del Concejo. “Es el momento de hacerla realidad”.



## Legislation Would Require Business to Offer Pre-Tax Metrocards to Workers

By Dana Varinsky  
April 28, 2014

CIVIC CENTER — Council Member Dan Garodnick announced legislation Sunday that would require businesses to allow their employees to buy MetroCards with pre-tax earnings.

The bill, which Garodnick plans to introduce to the Council on Tuesday, would require all employers with 20 or more workers to give them the option to pay for their transit with pre-tax dollars. According to a report by the Riders Alliance, a grassroots transportation advocacy group, this would save New Yorkers that buy an unlimited pass each month \$443 per year.

“It’s hard to live in New York City, we all know that, and many of us feel like the MTA treats us like a piggy bank,” said Dan Garodnick at a press conference near City Hall Sunday afternoon. “Helping new Yorkers take advantage of this tax benefit is a way that we can put a little more cash in their pockets at the end of the day.”

The ability to pay for transit fares from pre-tax income comes from a federal law designed to incentivize the use of public transportation. Currently, the Riders Alliance estimates that approximately 750,000 New Yorkers are able to take advantage of this law.

However, riders are only eligible to pay for their transit with pre-tax dollars if their employers provide them the option to do so. According to John Raskin, executive director of the Riders Alliance, legislation that forces more businesses to facilitate this for employees would allow an additional 605,000 New Yorkers to access the benefit.

“Fares keep going up and this is something the city can do to help riders save money,” Raskin said. Dan Garodnick also explained that businesses giving employees the option to buy MetroCards with pre-tax earnings stand to benefit financially as well.

“It’s not just a savings for employees, but for the employers themselves,” he said. “Dollars come out before they pay their payroll taxes for their employees.”

According to the Riders Alliance report, employers who offer the benefit could save up to \$103 per year in tax liability for each employee that utilizes the pre-tax option.

Councilmembers Ydanis Rodriguez, who chairs the Council’s Transportation Committee, and Helen Rosenthal, who represents the Upper West Side, joined Garodnick at the press conference to show their support for the legislation.

“We know that the fare increase is something that will continue happening at the MTA,” said Rodriguez, who added, “bringing a program that will make transit affordable for everyone is the right thing to do.”

After he introduces the bill, Garodnick said, it will go to the transportation committee for consideration. He said he hopes the initiative can be approved and implemented within a matter of months, though he acknowledged that businesses would need some time to adjust to the new law. “We want to be sensitive to the fact that it would take some time to start up,” he said.



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samara Karasyk

Address: NYC Dept of Finance

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Capt. Richard Avignone

Address: 1 Police Plaza

I represent: NYPD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Insp. Deborah Fulton

Address: 1 Police Plaza

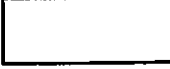
I represent: NYPD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: DEUG MARSIGLIA

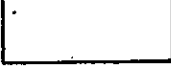
Address: DIRE CHIEF OF CLEANING

I represent: DSNY

Address: 125 Worth St. NY, NY 10013

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PAUL VISCONTI

Address: ASSISTANT CHIEF OF CLEANING OPERATIONS

I represent: DSNY

Address: 125 Worth St. NY, NY 10013

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Morra Dolan

Address: 125 Barclay Street NY NY 10007

I represent: Senior Assistant Director, Research &

Address: Negotiations, DC 37

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Adam Forman

Address: 120 Wall St Fl 20

I represent: Center for an Urban Future

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Krute Singa

Address: 1455 Market St SF CA 94103

I represent: City & County of San Francisco

Address: Seneca as debate

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: RWAN LYNCH

Address: 350 W. 31<sup>ST</sup> ST

I represent: TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN

Address: 350 W. 31<sup>ST</sup> ST

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jonathan Matz

Address: 347 E 125th St, Apt. Brooklyn

I represent: Blue Marble Project

Address: 64 Fulton St.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN RASKIN

Address: 121 Sixth Ave, 6th Floor

I represent: Riders Alliance

Address: Same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 20 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6-30-14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alec Slatky

Address: 1425 Kellum Place, Garden City, NY 11530

I represent: AAA New York

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 205 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jay Peltz

Address: 1385 Boston Post Rd, Carolmont, NY

I represent: Food Industry Alliance of NY

Address: Same

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Anthony Torres

Address: 30 Broad St

I represent: New York League of Conservation Voters

Address: 30 Broad St

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6-30-14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cate Contino

Address: 9 Murray St. Fl 3 NY NY 10007

I represent: NYR 20 Straphangers Campaign

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

295  
6  
THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jean Marie Theobalds

Address: 1475 41st Pl Brooklyn 11513

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tolara  
510 West 116th St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Andrew Rigie

Address: 2165 W 55 St, #203A

I represent: New York City Hospitality Alliance

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 6/30/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Tolani A. Adhoye  
Address: 510 Willoughby Ave #3 BK 11206  
I represent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 295 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Annee Davis  
Address: 215 Terrace Pl #3 BK 11208  
I represent: Riker's Alliance  
Address: VIA

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms