Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Statement by Rockland County Legislator Edwin Day

MTA Public Hearing - Proposed Service Cuts
March 4th, 2010

Good evening.

This is called "context" of what you propose.

Yearly, we here in Rockland pay you $106 million dollars ($88 million - your cost benefit analysis plus $18 Million in mobility payroll taxes). We get, according to your very optimistic analysis, $46 million dollars in value. So essentially, we get 43 cents back for every dollar we give you, lowest in the MTA region.

That value gap is now 60 million dollars, highest in the MTA region. That amount equals the entirety of all county property taxes collected. That amount equals the entirety of all yearly Medicaid costs. That is for 5 stations, fewest you have in any county of the MTA region. That is for the mere 1700 Rockland commuters who use these MTA services.

For the right to use the facilities the MTA controls, we now pay you an unbelievable $62,352.94 per commuter per year. And now you look to cut service.

The impact varies, and includes leaving an almost hour long gap between trains to Rockland by eliminating the 6:55 pm out of Hoboken. That is called "chutzpah". And so is this ... Two members of your board, Doreen Frasca and Allen Cappelli, last month called on using TARP funds to avoid cuts to the bus and subway system.

The fact is I introduced legislation here last year to use those funds for the four "quarter pound" Hudson Valley counties, so we could offset this onerous, job killing mobility tax. But I guess these board members were too busy playing lap dogs to the New York City interests to know this or even notice how egregious this relationship with the MTA is for us here in Rockland.

It is clear the MTA has lost sight of its regional mission and ceded it's authority to New York City interests. How else can one explain the surreal disparity in service to your
customers here in Rockland? Customers, I may add, who pay the most per person to support the entire MTA Region.

The pattern is clear. Your actions define your intentions. You do not give a damn about us. We are only useful to you as the proverbial stepchild with a bank account. You allow us to vent, and then return back to the city, not via the Pascack Valley or Port Jervis line, but by car and for one simple reason; you would not, and could not avail yourself of the services you supposedly provide to this community. In short, you will do as you please, cut services, and continue to pick our pocket.

It is my fervent wish that the legislation I submitted to withdraw from this "consortium of inequity" is one day successful, so we can control our own transportation needs, and you can then beg elsewhere for the cash needed to prop up this failing agency.

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