Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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Statement by Rockland County Legislator Edwin Day

MTA Announcement of Revised Service Cuts

New City, NY (March 20th, 2010) – Rockland County Legislator and Deputy Minority Leader Ed Day (New City-Haverstraw) has issued the following statement regarding the reported service cuts announced over the weekend by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA):

The MTA's announcement that they will be rescinding planned cuts to the Port Jervis line while maintaining planned service cuts to the Pascack Valley line is both unacceptable and an insult to each and every citizen of Rockland County, and not just those who use the rail service. The reason is simple; we all pay an amount best described as a king's ransom for the alleged service we receive.

We have seen politicians announce planned tax hikes and then later take credit for halving that tax hike. It is still a tax hike. Essentially, the MTA has engaged in the same political chicanery by announcing draconian cuts to Rockland, already the most underserved County in the region, and then implementing only some of these cuts. It is still a service cut. This sleight of hand by the MTA fools no thinking person, and accepting crumbs that have fallen from the MTA's table does nothing to impress either me or the citizens of Rockland. In point of fact, it is insulting.

The numbers are a matter of record. Annually, we pay $60 million dollars over and above the value of service we receive. This for five stations that only 1700 commuters use. That number unbelievably equates to the entire amount of property tax dollars collected. The cost per commuter for just the simple right to set foot onto these stations is an implausible $62,352.94 per commuter per year.

As I have said at their public hearing earlier this month, it is my fervent wish that the legislation I submitted to withdraw from this "consortium of inequity" is one day successful. I will leave no stone unturned in letting Rockland County control our own transportation needs, as these announced actions by the MTA demand we move forward as rapidly as possible. The taxpayers of Rockland County should no longer be expected to pay millions of dollars for a service that we at best use quite sparingly. I suggest to both the MTA and our State legislature that they try something quite unique; let those who use the service pay for the service. We here in Rockland are fed up subsidizing the New York City interest for a system that is largely used there.

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