

Press



Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislator Cornell Submits Written Testimony Opposing NJ Transit Fare Hike and Service Cut Proposals

New City, NY (May 22, 2015) – Rockland County Legislator Harriet Cornell, who serves as the chair of the Legislature's Special Committee on Transit, submitted written testimony to New Jersey Transit (NJT) in opposition to its proposal to increase fares and cut service. NJT's full proposal would increase fares on both the Pascack Valley and Port Jervis lines for residents who travel to Secaucus and Penn Station, and eliminate the 12:45 am departure on the Pascack Valley Line from Hoboken.

Legislator Cornell, who has been an advocate and supporter of public transportation in and around Rockland for decades, noted in her testimony that "Rockland is a transportation orphan," with limited public transportation options for residents. "We know that it takes time to build ridership for mass transit and when trains are eliminated, it has a very negative effect," Cornell continued.

Immediately after the proposals were issued, Legislator Cornell organized and held a public meeting of the Legislature's Special Committee on Transit on May 14th to discuss these proposed changes. During the meeting, the committee unanimously passed a resolution calling upon NJT to rescind the proposed implementation of fare increases and the proposed service cut for the Pascack Valley line, and urged NJT to hold a public hearing in Rockland County on its fares and its service. That resolution was unanimously passed by the full Legislature on May 19th.

Legislator Cornell pointed out that even though the proposals had a severe impact on Rockland commuters, they were not given sufficient opportunity to provide input. "During this series of hearings, nine [hearings] were announced but not one in Rockland. Customers who live in Rockland and Orange are not second-class citizens; they are NJT paying customers," Cornell wrote. "We are part of the MTA region and are already at the short end of the value gap between what we pay to the MTA and services rendered. Creating a forum to hear the voices of Rockland riders and of the elected officials who represent them is a good business strategy and one which pays heed to those who support the growth of public transit." Cornell recommended that in the future when NJT holds public hearings, at least one should be scheduled at an accessible location within Rockland County.

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