



NYPIRG's

## ***Straphangers Campaign***

### **STUDENT METROCARDS: POINTS TO MAKE AT THE MTA HEARINGS**

The MTA is facing a nearly \$400 million deficit in 2010. In response, it is proposing drastic cuts in service and ending free- or half-fare MetroCards for students!

Student MetroCards must be saved. Here are some talking points you can make at the public hearings being held by the MTA this March. (See [www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info) for hearing dates and locations.)

You will have three minutes to make your point. You can tell the MTA officials:

- **The story of what killing student MetroCards would mean to you.** More than 550,000 students get some form of student MetroCards.
- **How much it would cost you.** According to the Straphangers Campaign, costs could range from about \$343 for each half-fare child to as much as \$890 a year for free-fare students. These numbers are calculated as follows: For the half-fare MetroCard - an average discounted fare of \$1.91 multiplied by 180 school days equals \$343. For the free-fare MetroCards, ten 30-day unlimited-ride MetroCards at \$89 each would cost \$890 for a school year. That's for kids with extracurricular activities and whose families could afford it. The MTA is planning to raise fares early in 2011, so the cost will go up for moving students.
- **Forcing families to pay for student MetroCard will greatly reduce the access of students to extracurricular activities, to sports, to culture and to the life of the city.** Current student MetroCards are good for three trips daily.
- **In New York State, cities like Albany, Buffalo and Syracuse provide free- or half-off transportation to middle and high school students, largely on their local public transportation systems.**
- **The State and City of New York should pick up more of the costs of moving school children, as school districts now do all around the state.** Many groups – including the Straphangers Campaign, the Regional Plan Association and the Tri-State Transportation Campaign – look to the leadership of Governor Paterson and Mayor Bloomberg to solve this issue. Student travel has been subsidized on the city's buses and subways since the 1940s.
- **Up until 1995, the State and the City paid for the entire costs of student passes.** (\$128 million at the time.) In 1995, the subsidy was changed to one-third each (\$45 million) by the State, City and MTA. In the past two budgets, the State had cut its contribution from \$45 million to \$6 million, but has recently restored \$19 million, for a total of \$25 million.
- **The MTA says it cost \$214 million a year to provide student MetroCards.** The agency is now only receiving \$70 million in State and City support for student MetroCards.

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