



U.S. Representative • 9th CD, New York • Brooklyn-Queens

ANTHONY D. WEINER

Report

GOP CONVENTION PRIMER:

TRANSPORTATION

New York City Highways and Transit Underfunded By Bus

**Presented by
Congressman Anthony D. Weiner**

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Executive Summary

New York City would lose \$2.9 billion for subways, roads, and bridges if President Bush wins his fight with Congress to reduce the nation's transportation budget.

Every six years, Congress funds the nation's transportation projects. After the U.S. Department of Transportation pegged the cost of improving the nation's transportation infrastructure at \$375 billion, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee introduced a \$375 billion bill called the Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (TEA-LU). It is projected that New York City would have received a projected \$10.834 billion under that proposal.

But President Bush has indicated that he will veto any transportation bill that contains more than \$256 billion, which is \$119 billion less than TEA-LU. Under the Bush proposal, New York City's share falls to a projected \$7.858 billion, a \$2.9 billion cut.

Furthermore, Bush's Republican allies in Congress want to spread transportation dollars around to more places that don't need them, at the expense of New York by raising the so-called the "minimum guarantee."

If funding is reduced for New York City, as President Bush and his Republican allies prefer, scores of City subway, road, and bridge projects could be critically underfunded.

Mayor Bloomberg's response to the Bush record? "I think he's a great President," says Bloomberg, "and I'm going to support him to the end." (New York Sun, 2/25/04).

The Transportation Bill

Every six years, the federal government re-authorizes the laws that govern the nation's highway and transit systems. Congress must pass, and the president must sign, a "transportation reauthorization bill." In 1998, Congress passed, and President Clinton signed, a reauthorization bill entitled the "Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century," better known as "TEA-21."

TEA-21 expired in September of 2003, but Congress and the president have failed, as of yet, to come to an agreement on the specifics of a new bill. Since September, Congress has passed a series of successive extensions in anticipation of a final six year agreement.

In addition to a host of environmental provisions, two major issues have largely held up final passage of a new bill.

- **Overall Funding:** The House of Representatives, the Senate, and the President all have very different views of how large the next transportation bill should be. Funding for the bill comes from the "highway trust fund" which is financed from a number of sources, but approximately 90% of trust fund revenue comes from excise taxes on motor fuels, namely at 18.4 cents per gallon tax on gasoline (24.4 cents on diesel). That funding is later divided between a highway account and a transit account.
- **Minimum Guarantee:** In TEA-21, each state was guaranteed at least a 90.5% share

return on its share of tax contributions to the highway account of the Highway Trust Fund. If the guaranteed base share was less than a 90.5% return to a state, then the share was adjusted upward until the 90.5% share was reached. Other states' base shares were squeezed down to make room for these share increases and to prevent the national share total from exceeding 100%. Because New York's needs are so much greater than those of other states, it should receive well over 100% of the funding it puts into the trust fund. And even *with* the minimum guarantee at 90.5%, New York got back 128% of what it put in. But congressional Republicans, led by Rep. Tom Delay (R-Texas), are pushing to bump that percentage up to 95%, eating into New York's fair share of the funding.

How to Calculate Funding For New York City

Complicated funding formulas will dictate state allocations under the next reauthorization bill, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides figures based on projected revenues into the Federal Highway Trust Fund. Based on those projections, FHWA publishes projected totals for each state.

The funding for New York State is provided to the State Department of Transportation, which then allocates funding to state and local agencies. For highway projects, those state and local agencies generally apply to the State Department of Transportation on a project-by-project basis depending on who maintain any particular highway. Funding for transit agencies is allocated to the agency which maintains any particular transit service.

During the course of TEA-21, New York City, through both state and local agencies, received 30% of the states allocation of federal highway dollars. New York City, though both the State-run Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the City-run Staten Island Ferry and New York City bus services, gets about 85% of the state's allocation of federal transit dollars. The allocations below are based on those assumptions.

Differences in Proposals

Four different bill proposals define the debate on the reauthorization of TEA-21.

1. **The Original TEA-LU:** In November 2003, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee introduced a bi-partisan bill that authorized a \$375 billion worth of transportation spending. The bill, entitled the “Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users,” would have represented a 72% increase funding over that what was authorized in TEA-21. It would gradually have raised the minimum guarantee to 95%. But because the funding authorized was sufficient, New York stood to gain funding even though its share of the pie would have diminished.

Funding for New York City Under “Original TEA-LU”

Transit	Highways
\$7,285,786,145	\$3,548,479,052

Total
\$10,834,265,198

2. **The Senate Bill:** In February 2004, the Senate passed a \$318 billion reauthorization that would have replaced the “minimum guarantee” system with an “equity bonus” system that would nevertheless have reduced the percentage that New York City received in highway funding.

Funding for New York City Under “The Senate Bill”

Transit	Highways
\$6,067,957,074	\$3,080,156,053

Total
\$9,148,113,127

3. **The House Passed TEA-LU:** This July, under pressure from the President and fiscally conservative Republicans, the House leadership brought an amended version of TEA-LU to a vote. That bill, which passed the House, authorizes \$275 billion in transportation funding. The bill raises the minimum guarantee to 95%, but promises that states like New York will not be harmed. Because it is impossible raise the minimum guarantee without taking money away from certain states, this amended version included a “re-opener,” demanding that the minimum guarantee issue be resolved during the life of the authorization.

Funding for New York City under "The House Passed TEA-LU"

Transit	Highways
\$5,478,147,783	\$3,035,519,912

Total
\$8,513,667,695

4. **The Administration Bill:** Before TEA-21 expired, the administration proposed a bill that was dramatically smaller than the bills which preceded it. The President's proposed a \$256 billion bill that would not have raised the minimum guarantee. Because of the meager funding levels, New York would have suffered under the bill.

Funding for New York City under "The House Passed TEA-LU"

Transit	Highways
\$5,140,954,926	\$2,718,033,771

Total
\$7,858,988,697

Possible Cuts

Funding in the transportation bill will fund projects throughout New York City. Because it is impossible to know who any city or state agency will choose to allocate their capital funds in the coming six years, it is impossible to predict which transportation project will not receive the funding they require and be cancelled or delayed. But New York City will have to make choices, and some of the following projects will have to be delayed or cancelled if the City receives insufficient federal funding.

- **East Side Access**, which will bring Long Island Rail Road commuters into Grand Central Terminal, creating a terminal on Manhattan's East Side to complement Penn

Station on the West Side is a \$6.3 billion project. MTA expects to get \$2.3 billion from the federal government and other project stakeholders between 2005 and 2009. Funding for the project will be determined in part by how much funding is authorized under the "New Starts" portion of TEA-3.

- **The Second Avenue Subway**, which will relieve the pressure on New York City Transit's overcrowded Lexington Avenue Line and improve access to downtown Manhattan, is a \$16.8 billion project. First stages which could be completed during 2005-2009, would need \$1.4 billion from the federal government and other project stakeholders. Funding for the project will be determined in part by how much funding is authorized under the "New Starts" portion of TEA-3.

- **General Subway Station Rehabilitation:** \$1.539 billion to rehabilitate 55 stations including:
 - Times Square complex.
 - A number of other notable stations and complexes are addressed as well:
 - the 59th St./Columbus Circle complex,
 - 47-50 Sts. / Rockefeller Center station on the 6th Ave. line
 - Chambers St. on the Nassau Loop,
 - Forest Hills-71 Ave. in Queens,
 - Smith-9th St. in Brooklyn.
 - Other proposed rehabilitations will address stations along the Brighton, Sea Beach, and West End lines in Brooklyn, the Pelham line in the Bronx, and the Far Rockaway and Rockaway lines in Queens.

- **Harlem River Bridges:** \$900 million for rehabilitation of the Harlem River Bridges, including the replacement of the Willis Avenue Bridge.

- **Belt Parkway:** \$296 million for the reconstruction of bridges along the Belt Parkway.

- **Handicapped-Accessible Subway Station:** \$214 million in Americans with Disabilities Act investments at 17 Key stations, much of which will occur in conjunction with full station rehabilitations. Work at these stations will meet ADA specifications for platform edges, signage, lighting, handrails, and elevators and / or ramps. Highlighted stations include:
 - 59th St./Columbus Circle complex
 - 47-50 Sts. / Rockefeller
 - Bowling Green in Manhattan

- East 180th St. in the Bronx

- **BQE:** \$96 million for reconstruction of the Brooklyn Queens Expressway.

- **Subway Cars:** \$1.867 billion to purchase of 959 new rail cars, 912 to replace B Division subway cars scheduled for retirement and 47 for A Division growth.

- **Escalators and Elevators:** \$114 million to replace escalators and elevators. A total of 23 escalators will be replaced at three stations:
 - Roosevelt Island (63rd St. line)
 - Parsons Blvd.
 - Van Wyck (Archer Ave. line)

 - Union Turnpike in Queens
 - Church Ave.
 - Jay St. in Brooklyn.

- **Other Station Improvements:** \$148 million for other station improvements including:
 - transfer between the Jay St. and Lawrence St. stations
 - system-wide station signage platform toppings at four Brighton line stations
 - a new street entrance canopy at the
 - Bowling Green (Lexington line) station
 - replacement of gap fillers at 14th St. / Union Square (Lexington line).

- **Line equipment investments:**
 - \$311 million to replace approximately 53 track miles of tunnel lighting along portions of the Clark St., Lexington, Broadway-7th Ave., Times Square Shuttle, Smith St., 8th Ave., 6th Ave., and Houston St. lines as well as the Cranberry and Rutgers St. tubes.
 - \$563 million to replace 13 and add four new fan plants along the 6th Ave., Archer Ave., 53rd St., Queens Boulevard, Astoria, and 8th Ave.
 - \$126 million for state of good repair work at 20 pump rooms along six lines and deep well normal replacement work to control water tables along the Fulton, Nostrand, Crosstown, and Lenox lines. These investments will bring NYCT's pumps to a state of Good repair.

■ **Structure Repairs and Painting:**

- \$110 million to address 8.1 route miles of subway structures on three lines: Eastern Parkway, 8th Ave., and BMT Broadway.
- \$270 million to address 8.0 route miles of elevated structure on the West End line and the Culver, Ocean Parkway, Rockaway, and Far Rockaway and Rockaway Park viaducts.
- \$26 million to repair 3.8 route miles of retaining walls and overpasses on the at-grade Sea Beach line.
- \$167 million for painting projects (\$36 million for strip and repaint work and \$131 million for overcoat work) on the Jerome, White Plains Road, Pelham, Jamaica, Rockaway, Broadway-7th Ave., Flushing, Culver, and Astoria lines.
- \$31 million to rehabilitate 125 emergency exits throughout the subway

Sources: Federal Highway Administration, the New York State Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council, and the City of New York.

This is the fourth in a series of reports Rep. Weiner will release in the run-up to the Republican National Convention detailing the Bush Administration's record when it comes to New York City. The first three, regarding education, public safety, and job training, can be found at <http://www.house.gov/weiner/report26.htm>.

Congressman Anthony D. Weiner

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