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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

Istea Train To Washington

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority and a coalition of New York State transit professionals, advocates, public officials, and construction industry representatives will join Governor George E. Pataki in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday, May 6, to promote public transit as a critical element in the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). ISTEA is the bill that provides federal funding for highways and transit programs.

Congress is presently conducting hearings to decide the shape that the next ISTEA will take. The current legislation is scheduled to expire on September 30.

Governor Pataki said, "Our efforts for ISTEA reauthorization are working. National support now includes Hawaii, which has recently joined the 'ISTEA Works!' coalition. ISTEA has helped improve transit systems as well as roads, while increasing safety and enhancing the environment. The fight is still far from over, and New York will continue to work to have additional states and organizations join the effort to have ISTEA reauthorized."

E. Virgil Conway, Chairman of the MTA, said, "We will join the Governor in bringing our message right to the steps of the Capitol to make sure Congress understands our position that a robust ISTEA be reauthorized."

To emphasize the regional importance, the group will travel by a specially scheduled eight car train which will be comprised of cars from Pennsylvania (courtesy of SEPTA); Maryland (courtesy of MARC); New Jersey (New Jersey Transit); Connecticut (the Connecticut Department of Transportation); and New York (MTA Metro-North Railroad). It will depart Pennsylvania Station on Tuesday morning, May 6. A press availability will take place trackside (Track 11/12), at 6:45 a.m.

The train will make stops along the way to pick up key supporters. Representatives from dozens of delegations will join Governor Pataki; New Jersey Governor Christine Todd Whitman; Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening; and West Virginia Governor Cecil Underwood for a 12:30 p.m. press conference at the steps of the Capitol.

Members of the press are also invited to join the group for the entire day's trip.