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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Releases Branch by Branch Cost and Ridership Breakdown as Proposed Service Reductions Are Focus of Public Hearings

In an effort to help customers better understand the MTA Long Island Rail Road's financial situation and proposed service reductions, the LIRR for the first time has made public a branch-by-branch breakdown of annual ridership and the cost of providing service.

"We are trying to be as transparent as possible as we embark on a painful round of staff cuts and service reductions," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "These service reductions will cause the least amount of inconvenience to the least number of riders. While these cuts are painful for employees and for our customers, they are necessary. The LIRR needs to be more cost efficient."

As is the case with virtually all public transit systems, the price of a LIRR ticket is significantly less than the actual cost of the ride, a shortfall that is made up almost entirely by government subsidies. That is true across all 11 LIRR branches. The branches with the fewest customers are the most costly to run and – on a percentage basis – require the greatest subsidies.

For example, the Greenport Branch carried the fewest customers in 2009, a total of 69,986, generating \$726,304 in revenue, while it cost the LIRR \$6 million to operate. While the average fare is \$10.38, the actual LIRR cost of providing a ride is \$85.91 per customer, for a subsidy per ride of about \$75.53. Fare box revenue – money collected from ticket sales – covers only 12% of the actual cost of running trains between Ronkonkoma and Greenport.

By comparison, the Babylon Branch is the LIRR's busiest and generated more revenue in 2009 – \$134 million – than any other line. Last year, it carried 19,682,188 passengers at an average ticket price of \$6.81, but the actual cost of each ride on Babylon was \$13.25. The subsidy per ride was about \$6.44. Fare box revenue still only covered 51% of the actual cost of running trains between Penn Station and Babylon.

Systemwide, the actual cost of a LIRR ride is \$14.68. Yet, the average customer pays an average price of \$6.46, only 44% of the total cost.

For the complete branch-by-branch breakdown, please go to the [LIRR website](#).

Public hearings are currently underway, through March 8, regarding the proposed 2010 LIRR service reductions. Meeting sites and dates are available at www.mta.info/lirr.