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Press Release

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[Metro-North](#)

IMMEDIATE

ICYMI: Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi Op-Ed: 'New York's Road to Economic Recovery is Metro-North. We Must Sustain It'

Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi wrote an op-ed published today by [The Journal News](#), [Poughkeepsie Journal](#) and [The Times Herald-Record](#) about the impact in absence of federal funding for the MTA could have on the lower Hudson Valley.

New York's Road to Economic Recovery is Metro-North. We Must Sustain It

The road to recovery for New York and the nation is not paved with asphalt — it's a railroad track that runs through our communities. Metro-North and the MTA are critical economic engines that — make no mistake — will fail without significant additional funding from the federal government. In fact, we're already on life support.

Word out of Washington yesterday wasn't promising, but we remain hopeful that leaders recognize the critical role that transportation plays in allowing the recovery of our nation's largest regional economy.

The MTA is fast approaching the end of the line when it comes to our finances: The agency is losing \$200 million a week because of the precipitous declines in fares, tolls and subsidies caused by COVID-19. These losses are compounded by increasing pandemic-related costs for cleaning and disinfecting — leaving the Authority with a projected \$16 billion budget hole through 2024 that we can't possibly fill alone.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is already pulling our COVID reimbursement, and if we don't get the additional aid we've been asking for, the results will be catastrophic — draconian service cuts, employee layoffs, sharp increases in fares and tolls beyond what's planned, and a delay to our historic \$51.5 billion Capital Program.

Nobody wants us to see this happen. It would be unspeakable for thousands of incredible MTA workers, who have selflessly put their lives on the line throughout the pandemic, to lose their jobs, jeopardizing the reliable service that our customers — including the essential workers that continue to ride our trains every day — have come to depend upon. These people deserve better. New York deserves better.

Washington may be tempted to let us fail, but partisan rhetoric can't erase the fact that our state is the beating heart of the national economy, generating nearly 10% of the GDP. New York taxpayers have given \$116 billion more to the federal government than they received back in federal spending over the last four years, resulting in a negative balance of \$29 billion — far exceeding that of any other state. It just doesn't make sense to slow and stunt our recovery when New York has such an outsize impact on the rest of the country.

The HEROES 2.0 bill throws a desperately-needed \$32 billion lifeline to mass transit and commuter rail systems across the country. We thank New York's bipartisan Congressional delegation for standing up for public transportation, and Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, and House Democrats for making our industry a priority.

Senate Republicans need to act now — and, moreover, convince President Donald Trump to act now — so Metro-North can get back to where we were pre-pandemic: Serving record ridership (86.6 million passengers) more efficiently and safely than ever before, with new rolling stock and service to Penn Station from four new stations in the Bronx on the way in the new Capital Plan. We need to be there for our riders when this national nightmare finally ends. Washington can't miss the moment.

Catherine Rinaldi is president of MTA Metro-North Railroad.