

NEWS FROM ASSEMBLYMAN MARC MOLINARO

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MOLINARO AND MURRAY CALL FOR COMPTROLLER, INSPECTOR GENERAL ACTION ON MTA MISMANAGEMENT *Lawmakers ask for oversight, transparency, accountability*

Assembly members Marc Molinaro (R,C,I-Red Hook) and Dean Murray (R,C-East Patchogue) today called on officials to launch complete audits and investigations into documented Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) mismanagement. In letters to Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli and MTA Inspector General Barry L. Kluger, Molinaro and Murray said there should be a sense of urgency in ensuring greater MTA oversight.

“In the midst of the state fiscal crisis, national recession, and seemingly-endless reports of MTA abuse; taxpayers deserve an immediate and thorough examination of all that is going wrong with the MTA and what we can do to eliminate the waste, fraud, and abuse that is so rampant at the authority,” said Molinaro. “It is shameful that a multi-billion dollar state entity can be so negligent with the public’s money yet face shockingly little public scrutiny regarding their operations. The time for action is long overdue. Until the proper authorities undertake the necessary investigation, the public will rightfully have little faith in the MTA as well as New York state.”

“Even today we are hearing about MTA employees earning overtime while they are on vacation,” said Murray, referring to a recent Newsday [article](#). “It should come as no surprise that the MTA faces an estimated \$800 million deficit; and that’s without their service cuts and 7.5 percent fare increase scheduled to take effect in January. The MTA consistently refuses to reform its bloated structure but relies on businesses, non-profits, schools, and taxpayers to fund its inefficiency. It falls on the state’s comptroller and the MTA’s own inspector general to investigate mismanagement and criminality, bringing long-needed oversight, transparency, and accountability to the MTA.”

Following a comptroller’s audit critical of the MTA’s ability to capitalize on its significant real-estate holdings, Murray and Molinaro called on DiNapoli to reveal the findings of the audits conducted by his office while also undertaking a full, third-party forensic audit. The lawmakers argued that “only by examining expenses, contracts, and full budgets will we be able to rectify an agency whose reliance on taxpayers grows annually while the services that the MTA provides diminish.”

They pointed to the “job-killing” MTA payroll tax that costs Suffolk County and Hudson Valley businesses, governments, and non-profits approximately \$272 million per year. The tax was implemented as part of an MTA rescue package the state passed in 2009. Molinaro and Murray also noted the drivers license fees and vehicle registration fees that are diverted to the MTA.

The lawmakers referenced several recent reports of inefficient or criminal behavior involving the MTA, in addition to the Newsday article regarding overtime benefits for MTA employees on vacation. A June 2010 Empire Center [study](#) showed 8,074 MTA workers earned over \$100,000 last year. Also shown in that report were figures detailing that 60 percent of the MTA’s budget is devoted to labor costs such as payroll, pensions, and overtime. Overtime alone accounted for \$560 million for the year.

Finally, they cited a New York Daily News [piece](#) stating that MTA riders have 92 telephone numbers to call for information while the agency wastes 15 cents of each dollar collected in fares.

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