



SUSTAINABLE SOUTH BRONX

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Theodore W. Kheel
Attorney at Law
Park Avenue Tower
75 East 55th Street
New York, NY 10022

Dear Mr. Kheel,

Thank you for sharing your soon-to-be released report on New York City transit fares with Sustainable South Bronx. As you know, Sustainable South Bronx strives to promote environmental justice through innovative, economically sustainable projects informed by community needs. To that end, we believe your report is worthy of further exploration as New Yorkers continue to debate congestion pricing and an MTA fare hike.

Our public transit system is increasingly paid for by low-income New Yorkers with growing commute times and shrinking access to reliable subways, buses, and trains. This ambitious report is an important contribution to any effort aimed at improving access to public transit for the New Yorkers that rely on it most.

According to the Pratt Center for Community Development, sixty-four percent of transit riders facing a grueling hour-plus commute to work every day are earning under \$35,000 per year. Put simply, New Yorkers with the lowest incomes are, often, New Yorkers with the longest transit commutes. In the South Bronx, where only 23 percent of households own a car and public transit is a vital connection to jobs throughout the city, growing commute times are placing an undue burden on working class families.

To make matters worse, riders are providing the transit system with its largest source of revenue. According to the Working Families Party, fares cover fifty five percent of the cost of keeping the City's transit system in operation. In short, New Yorkers with the greatest need for reliable and affordable public transit are shouldering the burden of financing a system that fails to meet their needs.

Sustainable South Bronx welcomes any effort to rethink the way transit is paid for in order to make it more affordable and accessible to underserved communities. We look forward to seeing the compelling recommendations made in this report enter into the public debate.

Sincerely,

Majora Carter
Executive Director
Sustainable South Bronx