



Testimony to the State Legislature on the MTA Capital Plan

Good afternoon. My name is Miranda Nelson, and I'm the New York Director of Jobs to Move America. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

Jobs to Move America believes we can have a cleaner environment and good jobs in the communities that need them most. We work to transform the public contracting process to make sure that companies receiving public money use it to create jobs that sustain communities and the environment.

Along with our coalition partners in Electrify NY, we want to applaud the MTA's commitment to a clean emissions bus fleet by 2040. The 2020-2024 Capital Plan makes critically important steps to fulfilling that commitment, purchasing 500 new electric buses and including funding for electric charging infrastructure in bus depots. These commitments are crucial for moving us towards a lower carbon transportation system.

As the MTA rolls out their electric bus program, we want to encourage them to prioritize routing these electric vehicles through low-income communities and communities of color that have historically experienced harmful emissions and health problems due to their proximity to vehicles.

We also believe the MTA should ensure that everyone who is hired to build electric buses for the MTA has good, family-supporting jobs. The MTA is planning to spend \$3.5 billion on buses in this new capital plan, and yet, corporations receiving MTA money to manufacture transit equipment often do not create good jobs in the communities that need them. We must require that all public contracts serve the most public good by creating the kind of jobs and infrastructure that sustain communities.

The MTA should adopt a manufacturing careers policy to ensure that labor standards are placed into future MTA procurements, including their upcoming electric vehicle purchases. The MTA can include policy language as part of their procurement process to encourage the makers of buses and trains to commit to creating good manufacturing jobs, invest in new or existing manufacturing facilities, and establish pathways into the industry for people facing barriers to employment. Similar policies have been adopted in Los Angeles and Chicago with great results.

As the largest transit agency in the country, the MTA can be a leader in ensuring that our new electric buses are manufactured for transit agencies in workplaces with decent wages and working conditions. Our public transit money should be invested in jobs that lift up our communities. As stewards of the public's money, we hope the state legislature can continue to hold them accountable to do so.

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