



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 20, 2014
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**MAYOR DE BLASIO SIGNS INTRO 295-A INTO LAW, EXPANDING THE RIGHT TO
PRE-TAX TRANSIT BENEFITS TO MORE NEW YORKERS**

*Legislation incentivizes New York City employers to take advantage of an existing federal tax
benefit, saves companies and straphangers money*

*New law also encourages the use of mass transportation by making it a more affordable option
for commuters*

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today enacted Intro 295-A, which requires New York City companies with 20 or more full-time employees to offer pre-tax transit benefits. The bill encourages employers to take advantage of an existing federal tax benefit, which already allows businesses to offer its workers \$130 a month as pre-tax income for transportation.

The legislation, sponsored by Council Member Dan Garodnick, is expected to save employees opting into the program an average of over \$400 a year on their Metro Card expenses. Once companies start offering this benefit, employers can save more than \$100 per year per employee in tax liability. Reports also indicate that this law will extend transit benefits to more than 450,000 New Yorkers who are not currently offered them, in addition to retaining approximately \$85 million in New York City's economy.

“This is a win-win for local businesses and working New Yorkers alike—especially at a time when affordability remains one of the most pressing challenges facing our city. From saving employers money to making public transportation a more affordable option for straphangers, this bill will help New Yorkers get by a little easier,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “I’m grateful to the City Council, under the leadership of Speaker Mark-Viverito, for swiftly pushing this legislation forward, and I thank our Department of Consumer Affairs Commissioner Julie Menin for helping us implement this important new law.”

The law, which will be enforced by the Department of Consumer Affairs, takes effect in January 2016. Companies that do not comply will be subject to a civil penalty, but employers will have 90 days to fix a violation before it is imposed. To allow businesses adequate time to adjust to the new law, employers will not be subject to penalties that take place before July 1, 2016.

“This legislation will help New Yorkers to go green with their transportation choices by expanding pre-tax commuter transit benefits, making public transit a more viable, affordable option for our workers. As we emerge as a global leader in the fight against climate change, this innovative legislation brings together businesses and employees in our efforts to build a sustainable and environmentally-conscious future for New York City. I thank Council Member Daniel Garodnick for his staunch advocacy in this bold approach to reducing our carbon footprint,” said **City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**.

“New York transit riders need relief, and with this bill, they are going to get it,” said **Council Member Dan Garodnick**. “Straphangers are consistently getting less for more, and this is an important way the City can help them access an important tax break, while promoting mass transit use at the same time.”

“In order to achieve a more sustainable city, we need to incentivize the use of our transit system,” said **Council Member Rodriguez**. “By providing transit benefits not only are we promoting the use of our transit system, we are providing much needed relief for the middle and low income families that rely on our buses and trains every day. I commend Councilman Garodnick for his leadership and thank the Mayor for his support.”

“This new law will make transit more affordable for as many as 450,000 New Yorkers. The City can’t do much about fares rising every other year, but it can take this step that will help working New Yorkers save money on transit. It’s a win-win-win for working people, local businesses, and public transportation in New York. We appreciate Mayor de Blasio’s support for this important new law,” said **John Raskin, Executive Director of the Riders Alliance**.

“I work for a small company, and we get transit benefits through our employer. For me, the savings make a difference. The money I save on transit helps me pay for health care and other necessities. I haven’t always been offered the transit benefit, and now I’m fortunate to work for a company that provides it. Everyone in New York City should have access to these savings. Thank you Council Member Garodnick and Mayor de Blasio for supporting employees who rely on public transit to get to work,” said **Riders Alliance Member Jeanmarie Theobalds**.

###