S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

6887

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

March 13, 2009

Introduced by M. of A. KAVANAGH -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the transportation law, in relation to establishing a bus rapid transit demonstration project; making an appropriation therefor and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative intent. The legislature recognizes that transportation and community-planning officials all over the world are examining improved public transportation solutions to mobility issues. Such renewed interest in transit reflects the understanding that current methods of bus transit are inadequate to address increases in ridership and the continuing decline of bus speeds throughout the city of New York. Such concerns have led to a re-examination of existing transit technologies and the embrace of new, creative ways of providing transit service and performance. The legislature finds bus rapid transit can be an extremely cost-effective way of providing high-quality, high-performance transit. Bus rapid transit, while inexpensive to implement, will address current problems such as long journey and board times and serve as a catalyst towards further increases in ridership. The legislature further finds that bus rapid transit will not only increase ridership but also create a new and more diverse class of bus riders in preparation for the opening of the second avenue subway.

Therefore, this legislature intends to authorize the establishment of a bus rapid transit demonstration project in New York city and to monitor such project's statewide expansion possibilities.

S 2. The transportation law is amended by adding a new section 31-b to read as follows:

S 31-B. BUS RAPID TRANSIT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT. 1. THE COMMISSIONER SHALL UNDERTAKE A BUS RAPID TRANSIT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PURSUANT TO

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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SECTION THIRTY-ONE OF THIS ARTICLE, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, ALONG BUS ROUTES ON FIRST AND SECOND AVENUES IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

2. THE FEATURES OF THE BRT PROJECT SHALL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

A. DEDICATED RUNNING WAYS,

B. STATIONS AND BUS STOPS,

C. DISTINCTIVE EASY-TO-BOARD VEHICLES,

D. EXPEDITED FARE COLLECTION, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO OFF-VEHICLE FARE COLLECTION, AND

E. FREQUENT ALL-DAY SERVICE.

3. A. RUNNING WAYS FOR THE BRT PROJECT SHALL INCLUDE MIXED TRAFFIC LANES, CURB BUS LANES, AND MEDIAN BUSWAYS ON CITY STREETS. THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SHALL IDENTIFY, PLAN AND DESIGN RECOMMENDED CORRIDORS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRT PROJECT ALONG BUS ROUTES ON FIRST AND SECOND AVENUES IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

B. VEHICLES FOR THE BRT PROJECT SHALL INCLUDE STANDARD AND/OR ARTICULATED DIESEL BUSES. THE COMMISSIONER SHALL CONSIDER THE USE OF LOW-SULFUR DIESEL FUEL BUSES, DIESEL-ELECTRIC HYBRID BUSES AND COMPRESSED NATURAL GAS BUSES. ALL BUSES ON THESE ROUTES SHALL ALSO BE "LOW-FLOOR", "ONE-STEP" BUSES.

C. NEW FARE COLLECTION TECHNIQUES SHALL BE STUDIED AND IMPLEMENTED IN ORDER TO DECREASE PASSENGER BOARDING TIMES. EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE ELIMINATION OF CASH-FARES DURING PEAK HOURS, THE INSTALLMENT OF DUAL-FARE BOXES, COLLECTING FARES AT BUS STATIONS, A "PROOF-OF-PAYMENT" SYSTEM OR THE DEVELOPMENT OF "SMART-CARDS" WHICH ALLOW PASSENGERS TO WAVE THEIR BUS PASSES AT A READER AND ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR RIDERS TO DIP THEIR METROCARD.

D. INTELLIGENT TRAFFIC AND VEHICLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS SHALL BE STUDIED AND IMPLEMENTED AS A MEANS TO COMBAT BUS BUNCHING. EXAMPLES OF SUCH MEASURES INCLUDE AUTOMATED VEHICLE LOCATION SYSTEMS (AVLS) WHICH DETECT THE LOCATION OF BUSES AND THEIR SPEED, AUTOMATIC PASSENGER COUNTERS (APC) WHICH RELAY INFORMATION ON BUS AND BUS STATION COUNTING COMBINED WITH REAL TIME DISPATCHERS WHICH UTILIZE AVLS AND APC TECHNOLOGY TO ORDER DRIVERS TO SLOW DOWN OR SPEED UP, AND THE INTEGRATION OF AVLS AND APC TECHNOLOGY WHICH WOULD ALLOW BUS DRIVERS TO HOLD A GREEN LIGHT FOR TEN PERCENT LONGER IF NECESSARY.

E. THE NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SHALL EXECUTE A PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN TO RAISE THE AWARENESS OF BRT SYSTEMS AND REINFORCE A POSITIVE IMAGE OF BRT WITH THE PASSENGERS IT SERVES. SUCH INNOVATIONS COMBINED WITH OTHER COMPONENTS OF BRT SHALL BE ANALYZED TO INCREASE RIDERSHIP. EXAMPLES OF SUCH OTHER INNOVATIONS SHALL INCLUDE THE USE OF DISTINCTIVE COLOR SCHEMES AND SYMBOLS OR "BRANDING," THE CONSTRUCTION OF UNIQUE BUS STATIONS WITH WELL-LIT SHELTERS, SEATING AND PARTIAL WEATHER PROTECTION AS WELL AS TICKET VENDING MACHINES, BUS MAPS AT EVERY STATION AND REAL TIME INFORMATION WHICH INFORMS PASSENGERS WHEN THE NEXT EXPECTED BUS WILL ARRIVE.

4. THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SHALL DEVELOP PHASES OF THE BRT PROJECT. THE FIRST PHASE SHALL INCLUDE IDENTIFICATION OF CORRIDORS, SUB-CORRIDORS AND SUB-AREAS OF THE BRT PROJECT. THE SECOND PHASE SHALL INCLUDE PRELIMINARY DESIGN AND STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRT PROJECT.

5. ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER THIRTY-FIRST, TWO THOUSAND TEN, AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER, THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT AUTHORITY AND THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SHALL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR, THE TEMPORARY PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE MINORITY LEADER OF THE ASSEMBLY, THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, AND THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY. EACH SUCH REPORT SHALL:

A. DESCRIBE THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE BRT PROJECT, INCLUDING COSTS AND USAGE ESTIMATES ATTRIBUTABLE THERETO, IN RELATION TO ACHIEVING AN INTEGRATED ACCESSIBLE BUS RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

B. ASSESS THE NEED FOR CHANGES IN THE CURRENT MASS TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND THE BRT PROJECT BASED ON TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES AND OTHER CHANGING CONDITIONS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COORDINATION AND EXPANSION OF THE BRT PROJECT WITH OTHER PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AND SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES IN THE REGION AND THE STATE; AND

C. INCLUDE SUCH OTHER ELEMENTS AS MAY BE DEEMED NECESSARY TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BRT PROJECT.

6. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION:

A. "BUS RAPID TRANSIT" IS A FLEXIBLE, RUBBER-TIRED LIGHT-RAIL RAPID-TRANSIT MODE THAT COMBINES STATIONS, VEHICLES, SERVICES, RUNNING WAYS, AND INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ELEMENTS INTO AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM. BUS RAPID TRANSIT APPLICATIONS ARE DESIGNED TO BE APPROPRIATE TO THE MARKET SUCH TRANSIT SERVES AND SUCH TRANSIT'S PHYSICAL SURROUNDING. BUS RAPID TRANSIT IS AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND AMENITIES THAT COLLECTIVELY IMPROVES THE SPEED, RELIABILITY, AND IDENTITY OF BUS TRANSIT.

B. "THE BRT PROJECT" MEANS THE BUS RAPID TRANSIT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT CREATED BY THIS SECTION.

S 3. The sum of five million dollars ($5,000,000), or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the department of transportation out of any moneys in the state treasury in the general fund to the credit of the local assistance account, not otherwise appropriated, and made immediately available, for the purpose of carrying out phases one and two of the bus rapid transit demonstration project as identified by the commissioner of transportation, as provided by the provisions of this act. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the commissioner of transportation in the manner prescribed by law.

S 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire March 31, 2020 when upon such date the provisions of this act shall be deemed repealed.