

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

MMVTA responds to the Governor's special session

Governor Rendell held a special and extraordinary session with the General Assembly on Tuesday, May 4 to address immediate and devastating shortfalls of transportation funding. The failure to implement the tolling measure on Interstate 80 will have a direct effect on both capital and operating programs for public transit agencies across the state.

The statewide implications include an immediate \$484 million capital shortfall and an operating funding freeze.

“Not only will our future capital needs - including vehicle replacement and facility improvements – be in jeopardy, but our current level of service we provide to our communities will be unsustainable,” said Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA) Executive Director Valerie Kissell.

Many of MMVTA's planned improvements and future projects rely on state assistance via the Act 44 transportation law. However, now that the tolling of I80 will not come to fruition, several MMVTA and state wide capital projects including those of all modes ranging from public transit to highways and bridges are in serious jeopardy.

“The uncertainty of state capital funds and with Federal reauthorization in limbo, we are very concerned that the further evolution of our system may not occur,” said Kissell.

The loss of state capital funding will have direct affect on MMVTA's ability to replace aging infrastructure including buses, maintenance related equipment and other tangible items in the need of replacement or upgrading.

Plus, Act 44 was to secure dedicated operating funding that was to increase year after year at a rate of 2.5 percent. Without this fulfillment, operating funding will be frozen at current levels and the MMVTA will have to take measures to ensure sustainability.

“Current levels of services may have to be cut or reduced due to the increase in expenses year over year to provide transportation to our residents of the Mon Valley,” said Chairman of the MMVTA Board Dr. Harry Miale.

“MMVTA is hopeful responsible and swift action is taken to address the transportation shortfalls in the state for public transit and all modes to continue operations and improvements.”

The anticipated tolling of Interstate 80 was expected to fund the Commonwealth’s transportation needs for five decades. Without it, the promises of Pennsylvania’s 2007 transportation funding law (Act 44) will not be fulfilled, leaving not only public transit in flux, but also creating significant challenges to the maintenance and safety of the state’s highways and bridges.

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