



**BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT VANESSA L. GIBSON**

July 18, 2024

Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York  
New York State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Hochul,

I write to express my support for A7563/S72224, a bill passed by the State Legislature earlier this year that would end the so-called “death gamble” for transit workers.

Our city’s transit workers are essential to the functioning of our city. Every day, they serve the millions of New Yorkers who rely on our subways and buses to get around. Without our transit system and the hardworking professionals who keep it running smoothly, New York would not be the world-class city it is today.

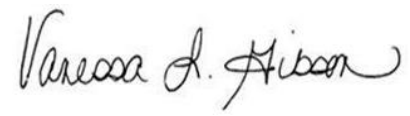
Currently, transit workers who are eligible for retirement but continue to work are risking their family’s financial well-being if they die while still working. This legislation would remove this risk by allowing the beneficiaries of these workers to receive their deceased loved ones’ pension reserve, as it would have existed had they already retired. Under current law, a transit worker’s family would only receive three times the worker’s annual salary if they died while still employed, which is generally less than the pension benefit the family would get if the worker had retired.

Transit workers should not have to risk their families’ financial futures if they continue to work their jobs and serve the public. By continuing to incentivize these workers to leave their jobs as soon as they are eligible for retirement, we are losing out on the wealth of knowledge and skills possessed by our most experienced workers. Correcting this would be a win, not just for our transit workers and their families, but also for our state as a whole.

Over the past two decades, the state has slowly phased out the “death gamble” for public employees, sector by sector, including for teachers, police officers, firefighters, and some corrections officers. Making this change for the transit workers would result in an increase in costs for the New York City Transit Authority in terms of increased payouts, but this is a small price to pay to ensure that our transit workers are fairly compensated.

Thanks to leadership in the Legislature, including from bill sponsors Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Stacey Pheffer Amato, we are close to correcting this oversight in state law. I urge you to sign this legislation when the Legislature sends it to your desk. Our transit workers deserve this change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa L. Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Vanessa L. Gibson  
Bronx Borough President