

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF PETITION

State of New York)
)ss.:
New York County)

ALEXANDER WOOD, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. I am Alexander Wood, the executive director of the Disabilities Network of New York City. The network is a coalition of individuals, consumer advocacy groups and provider agencies working to improve the quality of life of people with physical disabilities in New York City.
2. The network was launched in 2002 and now has approximately 130 paid members, including 15 provider agencies and several other organizations. Altogether, we believe we reach several thousand people with physical disabilities or who represent or work with them via our website, computer listserv and other efforts.
3. The network serves a community that, like other New Yorkers, relies on mass transit. Any fare increase would cause disproportionate hardship on the community because 70 percent of people with disabilities of working age are unemployed. Beyond the impact of a fare hike, access questions are of key importance for people who are disabled. Subway users who are disabled may require a station agent to give them access to a subway platform or to exit a platform using the electronic gate. If no station agent is around to help them, they can be caught in the station and vulnerable.
4. As a member of Disabled in Action and other disabilities groups, I was active in a past effort to keep token booths open. In 2001, NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign and other organizations sued to force the MTA to hold public hearings before closing any booths in 2001, as required by state law.
5. In 2003, as executive director of the network, I participated in meetings with a variety of other groups, such as the Joint Public Affairs Committee, a senior citizen advocacy organization, and NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign to plan for the public hearings on the proposed fare hike and the token booth closings.

6. At these meetings, we discussed the difficulty of getting the public to show up in the face of such a significant MTA budget gap and other competing budget concerns in the state and city. We agreed that the amount of money needed to bridge the gap seemed insurmountable and that some kind of fare hike seemed inevitable. We discussed the importance of the hearings and spoke of the need to get riders out even though the prospects for defeating a fare hike or convincing the MTA not to shut most token booths seemed grim.
7. In addition, I used the Disabilities Network listserv to encourage our members to turn out and show up in numbers at the public hearings. I am not able to gauge the response to this outreach because I attended only one of the five New York City public hearings.
8. I attended the first New York City hearing in Manhattan on February 5, 2003. I chose not to testify in part because I had decided that that the fare hike battle in particular was a very difficult one to win given the MTA's budget deficit of \$2.8 billion dollars. This was reinforced by newspaper articles and other reports that emphasized the size of the MTA's deficit. While I was more optimistic about the token booth closings, I did not see being able to save all 177 targeted booths open, also because of the MTA's budget problems.
9. At least four other advocates for the disability community did speak at the hearing. One of the advocates, from the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans Association, addressed only the token booth closings.
10. After the Manhattan hearing, I did not work on the fare hike or token booth issues because the result seemed inevitable and, given other budget news, I made a judgment that I should chose my battles and focus on those that were winnable.
11. After reading the audits of Comptrollers Hevesi and Mc Call, I feel that I and other members of the public were misled by the claims of the MTA that the budget deficit was \$2.8 billion dollars.

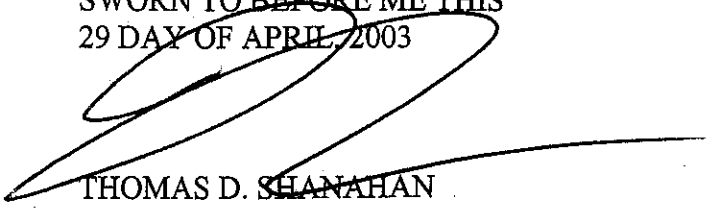
I ask this Court to grant the injunction seeking to enjoin the transit fare hike and support the Petition filed by the Straphanger Campaign.

Dated: New York, New York
April 29, 2003



By: ALEXANDER WOOD

SWORN TO BEFORE ME THIS
29 DAY OF APRIL 2003



THOMAS D. SHANAHAN

THOMAS D. SHANAHAN
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 02SH5083105
Qualified in Richmond County
Commission Expires August 4, 2006