

From **Citizens Taking Action** for transit dependent riders

[www.CTAriders.org](http://www.CTAriders.org)

The next monthly meeting of **Citizens Taking Action**for advancement of public transit and passenger trains will be on Monday, April 13th, from 7-9:00 PM, at Powell's Bookstore, Halsted and Roosevelt (800 W, 1200 S)

Roughly 7Ppercent of the CTA's Operating Budget

Governor's Proposed Transit Cuts Worse Than 1st Thought

*Jon Hilkevitch On Mar 12, 2015*

***Source:*** *Chicago Tribune*

March 11--The impact of Gov. Bruce Rauner's proposed budget cuts on the CTA is even worse than the $105 million hit that the transit agency originally projected, CTA President Forrest Claypool said Wednesday.

CTA finance officials are meeting with the Regional Transportation Authority to get a better understanding of how deep the cuts in the state public transportation fund would go if the 2016 budget plan that Rauner released last month were approved by the General Assembly.

The RTA initially calculated that the cuts to the Chicago-area mass transit system -- the CTA, Metra and Pace -- would total almost $130 million. In turn, CTA officials said a preliminary analysis of their agency's share of the cut came out to $105 million, which is roughly 7 percent of the CTA's operating budget.

"It looks as if it's higher" than the $105 million, Claypool said after Wednesday's CTA board meeting. But "until we actually nail that down with the RTA, I don't want to speculate on it here." He added: "I think we will know very shortly with certainty."

An RTA spokeswoman said Wednesday that the agency was "still looking at the numbers."

Claypool would not talk about the possibility of service cuts or fare hikes, with less than a month to go before Mayor Rahm Emanuel faces a runoff election against Cook County Commissioner Jesus "Chuy" Garcia.

CTA officials have already said that anything close to $105 million in state funding cuts could hurt the CTA's ability to provide "essential public transit services."

Claypool said the CTA will be working with transit allies in Springfield to get across the message that mass transit helps create jobs and stimulate the regional economy.

"As the mayor said, we should be doubling down on mass transit investments, not cutting," Claypool said.

"Look, this is a long way off before we get to this point," Claypool said, referring to talk about the return of a "doomsday" transit crisis.

"We have worked very hard to eliminate doomsdays from the CTA lexicon," he said.

"It's really short-sighted to say you are going to try to throw a monkey wrench and basically punish the CTA for doing the types of things that Gov. Rauner says he wants, which is efficient, effective government. I think we have proven at the CTA that we've done that. That's why we are in the strong financial position that we are. That should be rewarded, not punished," Claypool said.

"I think we have a battle here to ensure that the interests of the transit community are protected," he said. "We are working with Metra, we are working with Pace, we are working with the RTA. We are working with businesses and unions and others that understand that transit is a job creator and a revenue creator. It should be one of the last places you would look to attack in a budget process."

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