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Transit riders urge Transportation Minister Jeff Yurek to abandon flawed subway upload plan and fund the Eglinton East LRT

Local transit advocacy groups Scarborough Transit Action (STA) and Connect Sheppard East (CSE) oppose the province's plan to upload the TTC subway system. Responding to Minister Yurek's announcement that the Ford government was looking for private investors to build two additional subway stations on the Scarborough subway, Jamaal Myers of STA says, "Leaving it up to the private sector to build subway stations didn't work for Rob Ford's Sheppard subway extension, why would it work for the three-stop Scarborough Subway?"

Previously, the province argued that the reason for taking over the subway was to take advantage of its greater ability to borrow, but now Minister Yurek has made clear that he needs the private sector to build the stations for the three-stop Scarborough subway to happen. "Is this because the province actually has no borrowing room? Its credit rating has been reduced twice in the past year and is now lower than Toronto's", says Moya Beall of STA.

"The latest plan to involve the private sector looks like a recipe for even more delays - something this government claims only they can address," said Jennifer Robinson of Connect Sheppard East. "Speaking as a transit rider who lives in Malvern, my advice to Mr. Yurek is don't upload the TTC. Fund the shovel-ready Eglinton East LRT."

Toronto has the most integrated transit system in the world. Separating the subway and handing it over to the private sector is a wasteful and costly idea. People in Scarborough will still be facing long bus rides while politicians spend scarce public dollars on new transit in their own backyards. It will mean fare increases for riders with

less service, fewer jobs and training opportunities. It will mean critical maintenance of the system is neglected and less money for system operations and improvements, thus jeopardizing the bus, streetcar and LRT parts of the system.

“The province should abandon this foolhardy idea and return to its proper role - a trusted funding partner. Leave the planning, building and running the subway system to the city”, says Matthew Allman, a Scarborough resident. “Building subways where it wants them to go and not funding the TTC as a whole, shows the level of disrespect the Premier has for transit riders in Toronto”, he said.

The Eglinton East LRT will go before the Mayor’s Executive for funding approval in March. It would bring rapid transit to seven priority neighbourhoods and connect Centennial College Morningside campus, the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus and finally connect Malvern to the rest of the rapid transit system. Let’s get Scarborough moving now, not ten years from now!