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Mayor Fulop Denounces Port Authority Moving Forward With Toll & Fare Increases; Says Profitable Agency Continues to Punish New Jerseyans During a Time of Economic Hardship

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop today denounced planned toll increases set to take effect December 1st by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, an agency that continues to enjoy strong profits while New Jerseyans struggle to recover from the recession.

“By moving forward with toll and fare hikes, the Port Authority continues to punish New Jerseyans – and especially Jersey City residents – at a time of continued economic hardship,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “The Port Authority dumps a heavy burden on Jersey City taxpayers in three ways -- from the costs of municipal services provided to the Port Authority, from the increasing tolls and PATH fares, and from a staggering underpayment by the Port Authority to the City for its property here.”

According to just released data from the New York Federal Reserve Bank, North Jersey is lagging behind the rest of the metropolitan area in recovering from the recession. Last year, the \$4 billion Port Authority had a 31 percent profit margin, not including depreciation, amortization, taxes, interest and capital expenditures.

“The Port Authority is financially strong and could choose to delay this increase,” added **Mayor Fulop**.

On Dec. 1, 2013, tolls on cars using E-ZPass will increase 75 cents, following increases in 2011 and in 2012. The Port Authority will continue to increase the tolls by 75 cents for each of the next two years on cars using E-ZPass. Tolls on cars paying with cash will increase \$1 in 2014 and 2015. Fares will also increase for car pool and green pass motorists.

For PATH riders, a single PATH ride will cost \$1.00 more – from \$1.75 to \$2.75 – by October 2014, with 25 cent annual fare increases that began in 2011 and continue through next year.

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Earlier this month, Mayor Fulop announced that the city will file suit against the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for \$400 million for missed tax payments and undue economic harm caused to the taxpayers of Jersey City by the bi-state transportation agency.

Currently, for all Jersey City properties owned by the Port Authority – excluding the Holland Tunnel which is tax exempt – the agency pays the City \$2.2 million annually. Those same properties are assessed at a rate that would result in \$18.2 million in property taxes annually to the City.

“The Port Authority continues to create hardship for the people of Jersey City and it is time they pay their fare share,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “That’s why we are suing for back taxes and interest totaling approximately \$400 million and going forward we will also set the rate at a more realistic payment to benefit Jersey City taxpayers. The Port Authority isn’t struggling, though its host cities bear a tremendous burden. It’s time make the Port Authority respect the commuters whose money they grab every day.”

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////