



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



PCAC

For over 40 years PCAC has represented MTA riders. Since being established by the State Legislature in 1981 it served as the umbrella organization of the three MTA Rider Councils. The PCAC advises the MTA on behalf of the riders in the formulation and implementation of MTA policy and works to hold the MTA accountable to the riders.

Our advocacy uses a wide range of media to effect change on behalf of the MTA riders: public testimony, correspondence with elected officials and MTA management, press releases, research reports, blog articles, social media outreach, public events, attendance at local, regional and national conferences, news media interviews, and 32 public PCAC and Council meetings a year.

The following sections highlight the PCAC's 2017 priority issues, supporting our mission to give voice to MTA riders.

MTA Board Participation and Action Items

- Voiced concern over a \$67 million reduction in MTA funding from the NY State General Fund.
- Urged the City and State to fund the [Subway Action Plan](#), which is critical to stabilizing the subway system.
- Expressed concern over the MTA's rising debt level and the burden of fares on riders, in regards to the long-term sustainability of the MTA and its agencies.
- Recommended leasing MTA Maryland (MARC) coaches to meet Long Island Rail Road's summer service.

PCAC Executive Committee

Andrew Albert - Chair
Randolph Glucksman- First Vice Chair
Ira Greenberg - Second Vice Chair
William K. Guild
Mark J. Epstein
Orrin Getz
Burton M. Strauss Jr.

PCAC Staff

William Henderson - Executive Director
Ellyn Shannon - Associate Director
Bradley Brashears - Planning Manager
Sheila Binesh - Transportation Planner
Karyl Berger Cafiero - Research Associate
Deborah Morrison - Administrative Assistant

PCAC Guest Speakers

Chief Owen J. Monaghan – MTA Police Department
Danny Ilioiu - Director of Research & Development, NYCT Department of Buses
Joseph J. Lhota - MTA Chairman
Craig S. Schultz - Gateway Program Communications Lead/Amtrak Planning



Visit PCAC.org for all Council testimonies, calendar of events, latest articles & reports

Council Action Items

- Chair Andrew Albert appeared with Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams on NY1 to promote the need to quickly implement the NYCTRC's [Freedom Ticket](#) proposal.
- Council members performed subway performance surveys to inform ongoing analysis in preparation for 2018 reports.
- Worked extensively with NYC Transit staff to develop a passenger-focused [Subway Performance Dashboard](#), which was released after years of advocacy by the Council.
- Expressed to the NYC Council Transportation Committee the critical need to restore funding for the signal department's staffing positions, which were eliminated in 2009-2010.
- Passed a resolution opposing bus service reductions and calling for the need to improve local service.
- Met with City Council Member Brad Lander to discuss Carroll Gardens F Line and bus service.
- Participated in the NYCDOT Transit Plan Outreach session to discuss their transit plan for the future.

MTA Board Participation

- Testified for the immediate adoption of the [Freedom Ticket](#) proposal.
- Called for details on actions NYC Transit is taking to address deteriorating subway performance to be added to the Operations Report.
- Called for NYCT to monitor Second Ave Subway ridership trends and its impact on 6 Line overcrowding.
- Called for improved bus service by implementing a route pilot program to track the impacts of service on ridership.
- Supported enforcement of fare evasion and articulated concern for its impact on recorded bus ridership.
- Expressed concern that multiple weekend subway diversions make travel problematic and reduce ridership, as riders choose for-hire-vehicles.
- Advocated for efficient travel alternatives when the 2019 L train shutdown occurs.
- Supported the Enhance Station Initiative (ESI), but not at the expense of other infrastructure investment needs.
- Expressed disappointment about R179 subway car delivery delays that have impacted current service.



Council Action Items

- Testified in support of the LIRR Main Line Third Track project at its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) public hearings.
- Met with Congressman Tom Suozzi's staff to discuss his advocacy for rail commuters' rights and other issues that concern riders.
- Chair Epstein participated in a press event with Senator Charles Schumer marking the passage of legislation raising the amount of pre-tax income allowed to pay for transit fares.
- Proposed a formal "lessons learned" report to evaluate LIRR and MTA responses to Penn Station outages.
- Raised multiple Amtrak Penn Station construction concerns including, safety, communication, the delayed release of LIRR summer service plans, fare reductions for inconvenienced riders, and wrote to the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao seeking federal government reimbursement for MTA-LIRR borne costs.
- Spoke at Senator Schumer's press conference regarding the failure of the MTA and Amtrak in moving forward with Amtrak's East River tunnels rehabilitation, which the Senator secured an additional \$432 million in unspent Superstorm Sandy federal disaster relief money.
- Spoke with Congressman Lee Zeldin about issues at Penn Station and ways he could represent commuter interests at the federal level.
- Met with Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams to discuss issues facing Atlantic Branch LIRR riders and economic benefits that LIRR service brings to the borough.
- Successfully advocated to build a new pedestrian overpass at the Little Neck station.

MTA Board Participation

- Expressed desire to see what other technology is available other than PTC to ensure speed restrictions in terminals and avoid collisions.
- Advocated for NY State or LIRR to take over Penn Station from Amtrak.
- Praised LIRR's planning and service accommodation during the Amtrak Summer Track Work Program and expressed concern over the East Side Access delays.
- Asked for a classification of engineering delays and if LIRR can develop a preventative maintenance plan to reduce delays.
- Voiced dissatisfaction that the Jamaica Capacity Improvements Project will require complex transfers rather than the easy cross-platform transfers and direct service that exists now.
- Mr. Greenberg was assigned to chair the MTA Accessibility Task Force.
- Promoted the Main Line Third Track Project.



Council Action Items

- Testified in favor of making permanent the service changes at Melrose and Tremont stations to provide better access for Bronx riders.
- Worked on issues surrounding adequate information, including public addresses and audio visual systems in outlying stations.
- Advocated at the NY Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), regarding the proposed Lower Hudson Transit Link, to retain options for east/west travel in Rockland County and to East of Hudson Metro-North lines.
- Provided suggestions for the 2017 MNR Customer Satisfaction survey, which showed improvement in quality of service and riders' satisfaction.
- Recommended highlighting local station information on posted timetables at Metro-North stations.
- Suggested improvements to bus substitutions while maintenance repairs were conducted on the Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines.

MTA Board Participation

- Called for improved communications during snow storms, and for Metro-North to provide hourly service with diesel powered trains on all lines during snow emergencies.
- Expressed disappointment that NJ Transit continues to regularly cancel Metro-North Train 1618 on the Pascack Valley Line.
- Expressed the need for Metro-North to work with NJT to make the Suffern station accessible.
- Commented on the limited information on the MTA website of the Port Jervis Line Report.
- Recommended that Metro-North engineers be qualified to operate on the Port Jervis Line.
- Asked Metro-North to assist Clarkstown PD to upgrade security cameras at the Nanuet station.
- Discussed certain plans to cross-honor tickets.
- Met with NJT management to recommend the help of Metro-North on 2018 Positive Train Control compliance.
- Suggested LIRR use Metro-North's Port Jervis Line as a guide to help comply with the PTC deadline.
- Asked Metro-North to examine schedules for express service adjustments.
- Commented on the quality of Wi-Fi in Grand Central Terminal.

