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**Statement by Lisa Daglian, Executive Director
Significant Issues on and off the Agenda
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
December 18, 2019**

Good morning, my name is Lisa Daglian and I am the Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee, PCAC. We once again extend our best wishes to Commissioner Vanterpool and are even now getting the team together for that promised road trip. We also want to thank Helene Fromm and Midori Valdivia for their commitment to the region's riders and wish them well in their next endeavors.

The actions the Board will take today – most significantly, around the financial plan – will have a far-reaching effect on riders for years to come. We continue to urge no cuts to service. At the same time, the costs of operating the system that will be built with the new capital plan must be included in the conversation so we can all see the big picture. That will help us make the case for new sources of dedicated operating revenue so we don't see service cuts down the road.

The capital program is not on the agenda, but looms large. We'll get a presentation on the forensic audit, which we understand will not require rewriting the 20-24 Capital Plan but will require new processes – including around the Twenty-Year Needs Assessment and transparency and for a 45 day comment period, for which we've long advocated. Good news: no delay to the program; better news: an improved way of doing business that we hope will include robust public input.

Also missing is any discussion of the emergency debarment regulations, which were set to expire yesterday and which we believe will be extended – for the third (fourth?) time since they were implemented. We had hoped there would finally be an opportunity for public discussion around the rules, which go beyond the legislative mandate and automatically debar contractors from doing business with the MTA – and by extension, other state agencies – if their projects go over budget or over schedule by more than 10%. As we wrote in May, "Contractors must be held accountable, but so too must the MTA for the decisions it makes." Given the scope and complexity of the FY20-24 Capital Plan, getting the rules right is more important than ever – or we face the potential of increased costs and timelines built in by a dwindling set of contractors willing to do business with the MTA.

Thank you, and happy holidays to all.