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**Statement by Bradley Brashears, Planning Manager, PCAC
The Outer Borough Transit Fund Must Be Solely Dedicated to Improve Transit
At the MTA Board Meeting
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
December 18, 2019**

Good morning, I am Bradley Brashears, speaking today on behalf of the PCAC. Today I will be speaking in support of Commissioner Vanterpool's remarks that the Outer Borough Transit Fund should not be used for toll rebates but for transit. The entire point of congestion pricing is to get people out of their cars to relieve congestion, get them onto transit, and support much-needed transit investments – which will be paid for by funds raised through hard fought legislation. Rebating tolls is counterproductive to the envisioned concept of congestion pricing.

The New York City Transportation Assistance Fund legislation reads, "Moneys in the outer borough transportation account shall be used for the **exclusive purpose** of funding the operating and capital costs of metropolitan transportation authority facilities, equipment and services in the counties of Bronx, Kings, Queens and Richmond, and any projects improving transportation connections from such counties to New York County..." It goes on to say, "Funds **may** also be used to fund a toll reduction program for any crossings under the jurisdiction of the metropolitan transportation authority..."

Let's be clear, it says, "funds **MAY** also be used to fund a toll reduction program:" That use is not required under the legislation, and our position is that it should be used to fund transit improvements and not to reduce tolls.

Meanwhile, NYC Transit is redesigning the Bronx and Queens bus networks to improve service. However, the redesigns are to come with zero cost increases. The \$13 million that would fund the toll rebates should instead go to pay for more robust bus – or commuter rail or subway service to make transit more attractive. Funding a toll rebate encourages people to drive into the city at a time when we're trying to reduce that mode.

There is no real clarity on whether the Board has a role to play here, as the legislation says that the CPRB shall approve the use of the Outer Borough Transit Funds. However, CPRB hasn't been formally appointed, and therefore cannot undertake this important review, so where it goes after this vote is unknown. As Ms. Vanterpool said, the MTA is in the business of providing transit service, not providing driver rebates. There must be attractive alternatives to driving - anything less is unacceptable and detrimental to the success of congestion pricing.

Thank You.