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**Testimony to the MTA Board
The MTA is Counting on The Federal Government
By Lisa Daglian, Executive Director, PCAC
October 28, 2020**

Greetings, I'm Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

I had sincerely hoped to be able to talk about what the hard-fought passage of a stimulus package that includes up to 12 billion dollars for the MTA means for riders. I had hoped we'd be able to congratulate you on successful completion of the L line work and then talk about prioritizing projects as you resume the capital program. I think we'd all hoped that would be the case.

Congratulations are still in order. Riders may be fewer in number, but we do appreciate your efforts to improve the system. Thank you.

The reality is that the good news is more than offset by the dreadful prospect that only 15 stations – instead of 39 – may see planned accessibility work. System improvements and modernization projects now on hold could be delayed by years, putting the 21st century system we deserve – and that was in our sights – in jeopardy. Unfathomable service cuts and unaffordable fare hikes are in the all-too-foreseeable future. Layoffs are an abhorrent but tangible possibility. The consequences to our region cannot be overstated: an economic train wreck looms without an influx of federal funding (please pardon the expression).

State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli spoke volumes when he warned of the devastating and generational consequences of inaction. His is the latest voice to ring the alarm. Our subways, buses and commuter rails do more than move us, they are the economic engine of the region. Our recovery cannot happen without critical aid now being debated – again and again – in Washington.

Our message to Congress continues to be loud and clear: our region relies on the MTA, and the MTA is relying on you! It's also up to all of us to vote on or before November 3rd – it's our chance to express at the polls how important transit really is. The future of our subways, buses and trains – the future of our region – could be decided there. Thank you.