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**Statement by Ellyn Shannon, PCAC Associate Director
East Side Access and Congestion Pricing Readiness: LIRR Station Access
At the MTA Board Meeting
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
October 23, 2019**

Good morning, I'm Ellyn Shannon, speaking on behalf of the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council. A year ago, on October 18th, Newsday published an Op-Ed written by our Chair Mark Epstein. In it, he expressed concern regarding the incremental steps LIRR was taking to expand its parking portfolio and recommended creating one or two parking authorities, to operate on a county-wide or island-wide basis to thoughtfully consider current and future needs, coordinate existing resources and planned parking improvements.

We believe it is time this committee receive a comprehensive LIRR station parking and access update to hear what progress has been made over the nearly two decades since East Side Access's Final Environmental Impact Statement was issued. The environmental impact statement concluded that while several stations could accommodate the demands of the project- others would experience significant parking shortfalls. It also recommended several parking mitigations measures including:

- Expanding existing lots and garages
- Increasing service at stations with available parking
- Adjusting fare policy to attract riders to stations w/ parking availability
- Increasing bus service to stations and possibly subsidizing bus fares
- Improving station kiss and ride and bicycle facilities
- Providing preferential parking areas for carpools, with station enforcement capabilities

Congestion Pricing will begin in 2021 and East Side Access opens in 2023 the Council believes it is critical to get an understanding of where the LIRR is on station access and rider demand. Only then will we know if the LIRR's \$28 million in the 20-24 Capital program is adequate to meet the rider demand at its 124 stations. We don't even know how many new riders you are anticipating, with either of these events. 10,000? 15,000? More? Less? We want to be sure every one of them and the existing ridership can access the station easily at the start of Congestion Pricing and East Side Access's opening day. These events should be a celebration of great new experiences for ALL riders to celebrate. Thank you.