



NYCTRC

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT
RIDERS COUNCIL

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**Testimony of the New York City Transit Riders Council to the
Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority
on Proposed Fare Increases
Baruch College Performing Arts Center, Mason Hall
17 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan, NY**

December 8, 2016

Good Evening. I am Trudy L. Mason, a constant mass transit rider, using both subways and buses. I am also the Manhattan representative, recommended by the Borough President, on the New York City Transit Riders Council (NYCTRC), the legislatively mandated representatives of the New York City Transit riders. The NYCTRC was established in 1981 by the State Legislature as one of three riders' councils under the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC). The NYCTRC's volunteer members are recommended by Mayor, Public Advocate, and five Borough Presidents and appointed by the Governor.

While we do not support any fare increase for NYC Transit riders, we understand the issues involved. We also know that too many New Yorkers struggle to afford even the current cost to use mass transit. It is, however, positive that the MTA is proposing the smallest fare increase since the current pattern of necessary biennial fare increases began. We trust that the pattern begun in 2009 of smaller increases will continue.

The NYCTRC met and examined the two fare increase proposals MTA management presented as choices for this Board. After discussion by our members, we voted unanimously in favor of Plan B, which better serves those riders who use the system on a regular basis through increasing the base fare but providing a greater fare bonus for purchases of more than a single ride. We find that most often those who purchase single fares use the system infrequently or are visitors for a limited period of time.

Considering those parts of the fare proposals that are common to both Plan A and Plan B, as you have called them, we note that the increases on time-based weekly and 30 day MetroCards are held below the overall 4 percent proposed increase. Further, the percentage increase for local bus and subway weekly cards is lower than that for the 30 day card. The percentage increase on 7 day express bus cards is higher, but still below 4 percent. We believe that this is the correct approach, as it marginally lessens the burden of fare increases on the system's frequent riders.

In evaluating the differing base fare and bonus percentages of the two proposals, we favor the approach that results in a lower effective cost per ride for those who are

frequent users -- bus and subway riders. This is why we favor Plan B. In general, we believe that occasional and short term system users who do purchase single rides will be less burdened by a twenty five cent increase per ride. However, do we recognize that a large number of these single fare users are low income individuals who must pay on a single ride basis and that they will be adversely affected by a twenty five cent base fare increase.

For these single fare users, as well as for seniors and people with disabilities, we call on the MTA and New York City Transit to greatly increase efforts to ensure that all riders who should have reduced fare benefits and fare bonuses are able to receive them.

Until a new fare payment system is fully in place, NYC Transit must intensify its efforts to reach out to all persons who may be eligible for reduced fare and ensure that they receive these benefits. NYC Transit must also expand its mobile sales operations, to ensure that all riders have access to the lowest possible fares to which they are entitled. Finally, NYC Transit must also enhance the network of MetroCard merchants, so that those riders can get fare bonuses without visiting a subway station.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present the views of the New York City Transit Riders Council on the MTA's fare proposals.