

MTA Board Remarks – Metro-North Committee 121613
William Henderson

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the discussion that you will have today on the tragic Metro-North derailment of December 1. So much has happened over the past two weeks that it's difficult to take stock of where we are. For the families of those killed on December 1 and for those seriously injured life will never be the same, and riders' hearts go out to them, together with our thoughts and prayers.

As you are well aware, this accident has shaken riders, not only on Metro-North but throughout the region and nation. Holding these discussions in a public session is a positive step, as riders need to be assured of the commitment of the MTA and its agencies to the safety of riders and employees and know that the MTA is focused on ensuring their safety. We wrote to the members of this Board with issues that must be addressed, and we hope that the Board will act as advocates for riders, employees, and above all the MTA system and region. You are in a real sense the trustees of this vital transportation system and we have every confidence that you will act in its best interests and those of its riders.

We look forward to today's presentation and the unfolding investigation. At the same time we recognize that this work is not a simple undertaking and that there are no easy answers. The investigation of this derailment and will be long and the information it uncovers and its ultimate findings may be difficult to hear, but we urge you to move ahead with a clear vision and work to improve the safety of travel and restore the confidence of riders and the people of this region in this this system. To do so is vital to the future of this region and state.