



PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

2 BROADWAY, 16TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 • mail@pcac.org

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**Joint Testimony of the New York City Transit Riders Council and the Long Island Rail
Road Commuter Council to the
Board of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority on
Proposed Fare Increases
LIU Brooklyn, 1 University Plaza
Kimble Theater for the Performing Arts
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

December 10, 2018

Good Evening. I am Sheila Binesh, Brooklyn resident and rider. Tonight, I am representing both the New York City Transit Riders Council and the Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council. The Councils are members of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC), and were established by the New York State Legislature in 1981 as the official voice of the riders.

Our Councils are concerned about ever-increasing fares, especially for financially stretched riders. This is particularly true for riders who use both the LIRR and NYC Transit systems, and will be hit twice by the proposed fare increases. We want the fairest deal for the most frequent customers – regular commuters.

While we recognize that the proposed fare hikes are likely to be imposed, there can be **no cuts to service**. We can't go back to the old days of disinvestment leading to riders abandoning the system – the transit death spiral, as it's called. The bottom line is that we expect any fare increase to translate into better, more reliable service.

As the L Tunnel Reconstruction Project begins next April, Brooklyn riders will be paying more for less service and more crowded adjacent lines. With the opening of East Side Access, Brooklyn-bound LIRR riders will lose their one set ride during peak hours, by having to make a cumbersome transfer at Jamaica Station to "scoot" service. While we understand the importance of the Sandy work on the L line tunnels that will eventually provide a safer commute, we cannot support the changes that the scoot service will bring. All of the MTA's users deserve a reliable and convenient ride.

We understand that money needs are great and funding options are not. Thus, it is critical that recurring, sustainable funding be identified for the entire transit system. MTA riders need the City and the State to work together to ensure that the transportation system is well maintained and improved. Thank you.